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Squabble over Rota poker machines leads to another lawsuit. PAGE 2

Owner of Hakubotan land sues company. PAGE 3

Yana, Atalig given 'last opportunity'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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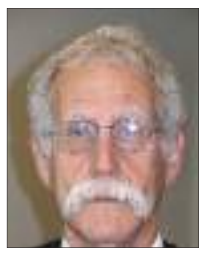
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo on Friday ordered the temporary release from detention attorneys Reynaldo O. Yana and Antonio M. Atalig for another two weeks as their "last opportunity" to explain how they calculated their attorneys' fees and why they were so high in connection with the Angel Malite probate.



Govendo

See YANA on Page 4

STREET FOOD HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

The aroma of fresh squid cooked in margarine and onion draws tourists and residents to this food stall every Thursday night at the Garapan Street Market. The street market offers not only cooked food, fresh fruits, vegetables, and handicrafts, but also live cultural song and dance performances.

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POLL RESULTS

Should there be more than just one legal cockfighting arena on Saipan?

Yes-**42**

No-**44**

No opinion-**8**

Sunday, January 18, 2009

111 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

Beautiful Waves

To find the best kept secret in town, head north to the Palms Resort Saipan, where a restaurant is creating a sensation among the lunchtime crowd for its wide selection of authentic Japanese cuisine, imposing architecture, stunning view, exceptional service, and the kind of prices that will keep you coming back for more.

Life & Style...Page 19

ON ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT

'Recommended changes did not affect outcome'

By KRISTI EATON
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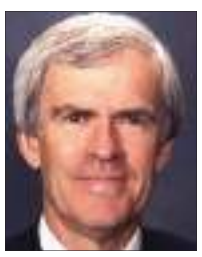
REPORTER

In response to questions raised by two U.S. senators, one of the authors of an economic report looking at the impact of federal laws on the CNMI says drafts were given to officials within the Fitial administration before its release but no major changes were made impacting the final results.



Bingaman

Murkowski

In December, Sen. Jeff Bingaman, who chairs the U.S. Senate's Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and Sen. Lisa Murkowski wrote to Malcolm McPhee, one of the authors of the Economic Impact of Federal Laws on the CNMI, questioning sources and assumptions of the study. The federally funded report has been used to support the CNMI's lawsuit against federalization.

In the 17-page response,

See RECOMMENDED on Page 4

Obama stimulus plan not sure bet to heal economy

By TOM RAUM
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

AP

President-elect Barack Obama speaks at the War Memorial Plaza during his whistle stop train trip, Saturday, Jan. 17, 2009, in Baltimore.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Barack Obama and his congressional allies are gambling that the largest public spending program since World War II and a new round of tax cuts will pry the economy from the

See OBAMA on Page 4

RELATED NEWS

- Economic stimulus bill to fuel Obama's priorities.

PAGE 14

Local

Squabble over Rota poker machines leads to another lawsuit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The fight among investors over control of poker machines on Rota has resulted to another filing of a lawsuit.

Blue Bird. Inc. filed the new lawsuit, which is described by its counsel, Ramon K. Quichocho, as a corporate hijacking case.

Blue Bird sued Byung Kook Choi, Byoong Seob Choi, Kyung Hee Joo, Bo Kyun Choi, and Pacific Rota LLC for beach of fiduciary duty, conversion, and accounting.

Blue Bird asked the Superior Court to order the defendants to pay damages. The plaintiff also requested the court to issue an injunction against the defendants to prevent any future corporate hijacking.

Quichocho stated in the complaint that on Aug. 5, 2003, Blue Bird was incorporated under the CNMI laws and its shareholders are Ok Hwa Lee and Dong Suk Kim.

Blue Bird's officers are Ok Hwa Lee, Dong Suk Kim, and Magdalene M. Taga. Listed as its directors are Ok Hwa Lee, Dong Suk Kim, and Taga. Dong Kyu Lee is its registered agent.

Quichocho said that Blue Bird then engaged in Byung Kook Choi (BK Choi) to manage the corporation.

Quichocho said that on Dec. 30, 2003, unknown to the real officers, directors, and shareholders of Blue Bird, BK Choi and his brother, Byoong Seob Choi (BS Choi), convened on Saipan a "board of directors" meeting of Blue Bird.

The lawyer said in that "meeting" BK became the president and his brother, Byoong Seob Choi, was chosen vice-president of Blue Bird.

In 2004, Blue Bird opened the poker game rooms in Songsong and Sinapalo on Rota. BK Choi managed both locations, but allegedly failed to remit money to the real owners of Blue Bird.

Quichocho said BK Choi claimed that the corporation was not making money.

In 2007, BK Choi changed the Blue Bird license in Songsong to Pacific Rota LLC, without permission from the owners of Blue Bird.

Quichocho said BK Choi and others transferred the poker machines that were in Songsong to Pacific Rota LLC.

Quichocho said that in November 2008, when Ok Hwa Lee and Dong Suk Kim arrived from Korea, they removed BK Choi as caretaking manager for Blue Bird and its business holdings and interests in the CNMI.

The lawyer said the grounds for removal include breach of trust and fiduciary duties by unlawful taking of assets and monies belonging to Blue Bird, engaging in personal business dealings, and filing fraudulent corporate documents.

Court documents show that it was BK Choi and his company, Pacific Rota LLC, who filed the first lawsuit against Quichocho and his wife, Frances, Vianney Hocog, Fidel S. Mendiola, Abelina T. Mendiola, Jung Ja Kim, and Dan Bi Choi, over the squabble on 10 poker machines on Rota.

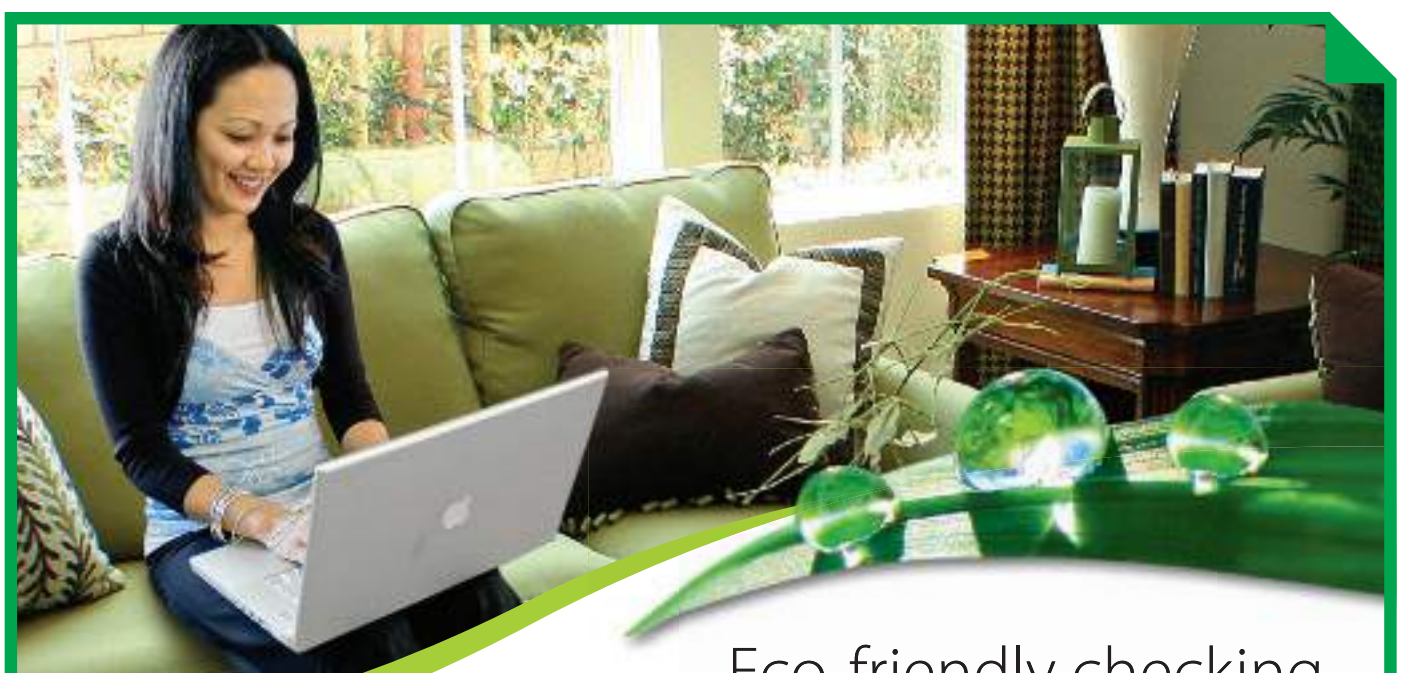
Choi and Pacific Rota, through counsel Stephen Woodruff, sued the defendants for interference with prospective advantage and contractual relations, trespass, wrongful ejectment, civil breach of peace, conversion, conspiracy, breach of contract, and fraud.

In addition, Choi and Pacific Rota sued Quichocho for an eye poking assault, screwdriver assault, and false imprisonment.

But Frances Quichocho and Tan Dingco LLC, through Ramon Quichocho, also then filed a lawsuit against BK Choi, Pacific Rota, and five unnamed co-defendants.

In the counter-lawsuit, atty. Quichocho said that in October 2008, Pacific Saipan sold its ownership on 10 poker machines to Tan Dingco for $25,000.

The lawyer alleged that even after the purchase of the machines, BK Choi continued to manage the business and refused to report any income or expenses.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JAPANESE CELEBRITY CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Japanese model Erika Okushi, left, who ran the half marathon, and former Miss NMI Universe Janet King, who ran the 10K Fun Run, are all smiles after taking part in the 2008 Winter Festival of Runs Saturday.

DPS closes fire probe at MGM factory

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The investigation into the fire that broke out at the Marianas Garment Manufacturing in Chalan Piao last July 9 was closed as arson investigators concluded it was accidental.

Fire Prevention Section's Firefighter 2 Dan Suel said after looking at all the evidence they concluded that the cause of the fire at MGM factory was faulty electrical wiring.

Suel said nobody was charged or cited for violation because those kind of fires, electrical fires, are considered accidental.

"Nobody is actually at fault. It's not intentional," Suel said.

He said in the particular area where the fire started there were a lot of combustible materials stored such as clothing, fabrics, and boxes.

Suel said they found that the electrical wiring snapped and fell down on the combustible materials.

He said it took them a while to complete the investigation because it was a major fire and that they gathered all the evidence before coming up with a conclusion.

"Actually we already had a conclusion several months ago, but I want to have all the documents into my office to make sure that our conclusion as complete as we can," Suel added.

Arson investigators established that the fire had originated in the sewing section.

Due to heat transfer, the dormitory on the east side was also burned and sustained total loss. In addition, the four 40-footer containers were reportedly burned as a result of heat transfer.

The fire resulted in the evacuation of over 200 factory workers. Nobody was injured.

MGM deputy general manager Zeng Gengzin recently told the Department of Labor that the factory ceased active garment manufacturing last Dec. 8, but they are officially closing on Feb. 7.

FOR ALLOWING PREMISES TO DETERIORATE

Owner of Hakubotan land sues company

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The owner of a land in Chalan Laulau, where the closed Hakubotan is located, has filed a lawsuit against the successor or assignee of the former duty free shop for allegedly failing to get a liability insurance and allowing the premises to deteriorate rapidly.

Commco Ltd., through counsel Ramon K. Quichocho, sued Palm Garden Micronesia Inc. for breach of contract.

Commco asked the Superior Court to terminate its lease agreement and order Palm Garden to pay damages for injuries caused on the premises.

The plaintiff also demanded payment for attorney's fees and court costs.

Quichocho stated in the complaint that in September 1994, Commco, as landlord, entered into a lease agreement with Hakubotan Saipan Enterprises Inc.

Under the agreement, Hakubotan, as tenant, leased Commco's 1,811.61 square meters of land in Chalan Laulau. The lease was for a term commencing in September 1994 and ending on April 30, 2019.

Quichocho said that, in Septemvber 1998, Commco and Hakubotan amended the lease.

A provision of the lease, Quichocho said, obligated Hakubotan to maitain during the term of the lease, liability insurance on the premises to cover bodily injury, fatal or non-fatal, and injury to property of any person at Commco's sole cost and expense.

The lawyer said that another provision of the lease stated that Hakubotan "shall not allow any waste or nuisance on the premises, or use or allow the premises to be used for any unlawful purpose."

Quichocho said Hakubotan was involved in a foreclosure lawsuit filed in the Superior Court in 2002.

As a result of the lawsuit, the lawyer said, Palm Garden ended up acquiring all the rights and interests of the mortgages with respect to the indebtedness of Hakubotan.

Quichocho said that, on May 10, 2005, Hakubotan assigned to Palm Garden all of the former leasehold rights, title, estate, and interest in the property.

He said that under the terms of the assignment, Palm Garden agreed to assume all the rights and duties of Hakubotan as a tenant of the property.

Quichocho said his client sent a notice to inspect the premises on Jan. 22 2008, but Palm Garden did not respond.

He said Commco then found out that Palm Garden did not renew the liability insurance over the premises in breach of the lease agreement.

Furthermore, Quichocho said, upon ocular inspection, Commco discovered that Palm Garden had allowed waste and nuisance on the premises by leaving the premises idle and deteriorating rapidly.

He said Commco wrote more letters to inform Palm Garden of its breach of the lease agreement, but the company refused to respond.

"Palm Garden is now in default. Plaintiff Commco is entitled to termination of the lease on account of this breach," Quichocho pointed out.

Hakubotan used to be the second biggest duty free shop on Saipan. With its closure in early 2000s, the company faced numerous lawsuits.

In 2003, the Guam Superior Court ordered the company to pay close to $1.7 million to Guam Marine Salvage Services Inc.

In April 2005, CNMI Superior Court associate judge David Wiseman ordered the termination of the court-sanctioned receivership placed on Hakubotan after determining that there is still no operating capital found to re-open its store on the island.

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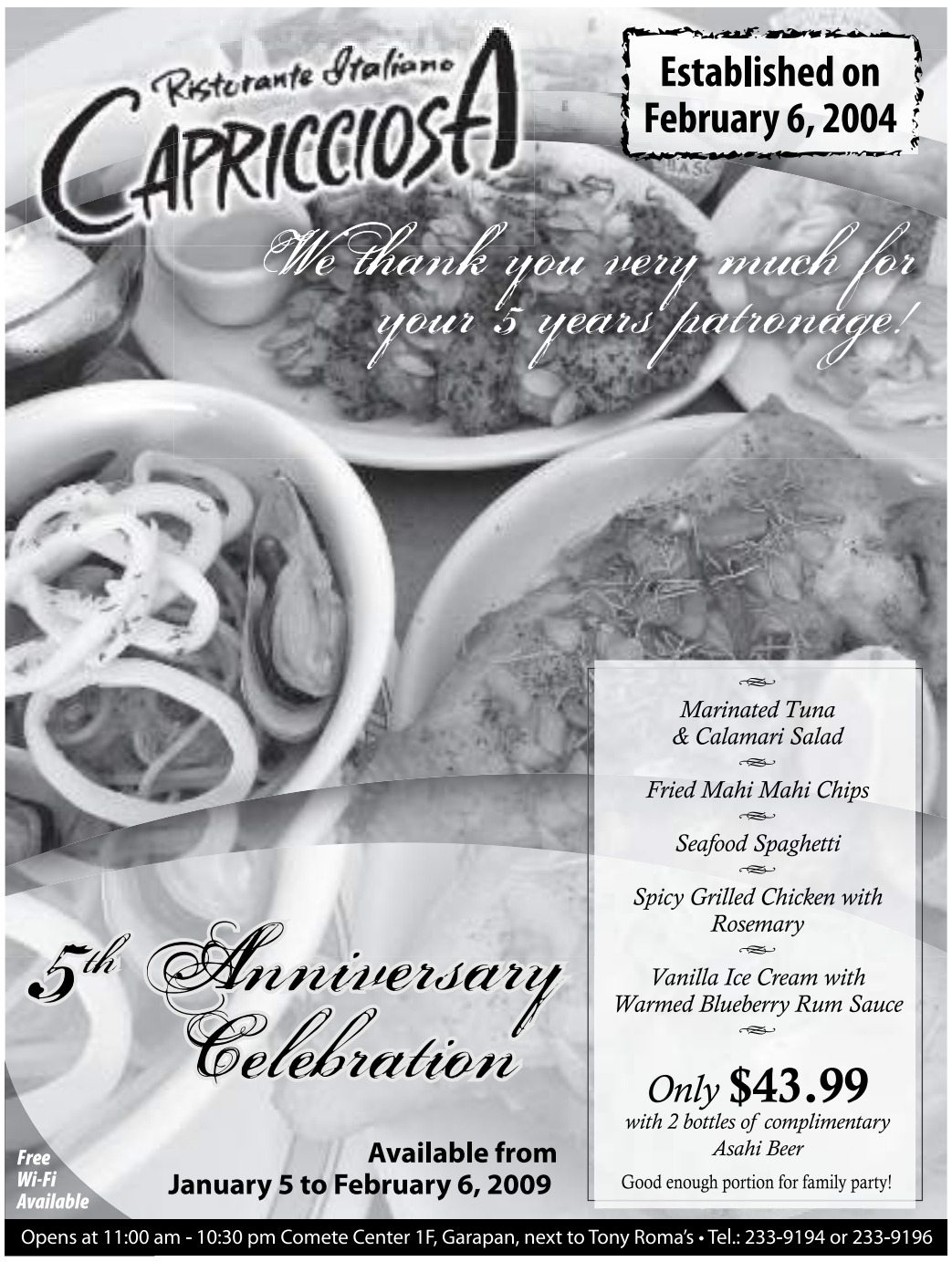
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Salaries for LB employees reduced

By KRISTI EATON
kristi_eaton@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

To cope with a tightening budget, the Legislative Bureau is cutting the salaries of all employees.

LB director Glenna S.P. Reyes said administrative staff employees have received salary reductions, while the professional staff employees were issued termination notices. They will be offered new contracts with reduced salaries, she said.

"It's just very unfortunate that this decision has to be made to lower salaries given the financial condition," she said.

Reyes said she does not intend to terminate any employees as long as the budget allows, but in order to do that employees must receive reduced salaries. The salary reduction will occur across the board—from director on down, she said.

The LB's budget was initially reduced by 10.7 percent. Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's decision to slash the budgets of all government agencies further reduced the budget by 5.5 percent to $1.3 million, Reyes said.

"Nobody wants to have their salary reduced," she said. "To be frank, just no one wants it. But everyone is aware of our economic conditions at the LB. I ask for their cooperation and understanding. I need us to continue working as a team and make the best of what we have."

The budget for operations, she said, has been reduced to $80,00 for the rest of the fiscal year. The revised fiscal year 2009 budget recently passed by the House of Representatives budgets $1.61 for the LB—$1.37 for the 33 full time employees' salaries and $239,526 for non-personnel.

The director said the LB has been working on ways to reduce operating costs, including shutting down the air conditioner every night and reducing paper consumption.

Reducing the workweek to four days would allow employees to seek other employment to make up for the salary reductions, Reyes said. Senate President Pete Reyes and House Speaker Arnold Palacios have discussed reducing the workweek by one day.

But, the director said, the decision lies with the Legislature. They must pass the austerity holiday law or decide to shutdown the entire Legislature once a week.

"As you know, the LB is created for the sole purpose of supporting the Legislature. If the Legislature is going to open five days a week, we will open five days a week," she said.

OBAMA

From Page 1

recession's iron grip and avert another Depression.

But what if they're wrong?

Some conservative economists say that additional stimulus may only prolong the grief at best, triggering runaway inflation down the road and resulting in an even more bloated federal bureaucracy.

"I think the economy will recover regardless of what Washington does. But the long-term effect here will be to reduce the standard of living of the next generation because they will be saddled with all this debt," said Chris Edwards of the libertarian-leaning Cato Institute.

Even without the new spending proposed by Obama, the U.S. has a $1.2 trillion budget deficit this year, he noted. "If that isn't already enough of a Keynesian stimulus, what is?"

Early 20th-century British economist John Maynard Keynes argued that the government should intervene to avoid depressions by increasing its own spending and controlling interest rates. President Franklin D. Roosevelt based many of his New Deal spending initiatives on Keynesian theory.

But not all economists and politicians subscribe to that world view.

While there is broad support for some kind of major stimulus, the skeptics offer this as Exhibit A: The trillions hurled at the problem last year by Congress, the Bush administration and the Federal Reserve have yet to yield many tangible results.

Unemployment continues to climb, reaching a 16-year high of 7.2 percent in December and is expected to keep on rising through 2009. U.S. manufacturing remains in a serious slump. The decline in consumer spending in late 2008 is expected to continue.

Home values keep eroding. For many people, loans are hard or impossible to obtain. Millions of retirement accounts have been slammed by sharp stock market losses. Financial collapses, bailouts, rescue plans, foreclosures and profit reversals litter the landscape.

"What in September began as an emergency response to stabilize our financial markets has morphed before our very eyes into a string of taxpayer funded bailouts," said Rep. Spencer Bachus of Alabama, the senior Republican on the House Financial Services Committee. "Trillions of dollars in taxpayer backed guarantees and loans have been extended."

In short order last week, Congress cleared the way for a new $350 billion installment of bailout cash for the financial industry while House Democrats rolled out details of a $825 billion two-year stimulus package incorporating most of Obama's priorities. About one-third of it would go to tax breaks, with the rest to government spending. The plan could reach $1 trillion by the time Congress sends it to Obama's desk.

Allen Sinai, president of Decision Economics, a Boston-area financial consulting firm, said that even with Obama's aggressive spending program, the economy seems unlikely to show a true recovery this year in terms of sustainable gains by consumers and businesses.

"There are forces going on that are 1930s-like," Sinai said. "There is incredible asset deflation, a huge loss in wealth by households. In the '30s, even when funds became available from the financial system to borrow, the pessimism by consumers and businesses was so great that no one wanted to spend." Sinai wouldn't rule out a repeat of that mind-set.

Some economists who are not fans of Keynesian economics or stimulus packages argue that FDR's vaunted New Deal programs, highly touted today as a model for job creation, did little to spur a U.S. recovery.

RECOMMENDED

From Page 1

McPhee responds point-by-point to the senators' questions as well as to inconsistencies reported in the *Saipan Tribune*.

One of the major conclusions in the report states that "under a federalized immigration system, the CNMI will lose approximately 44 percent of its gross domestic product, 60 percent of its jobs, and 45 percent of its personal income by 2015."

Some of the officials within the Fitial administration—Howard Willens, special legal counsel to Fitial; Deanne Siemer, special legal counsel for the Department of Labor; and Richard Pierce, governor's special assistant for economic affairs and trade relations, were given draft copies of the report, but their recommended changes did not affect the outcome, McPhee said. Most of the changes recommended by the three were organizational and editing, McPhee said. They did suggest changes be made to the final recommendations included in the report—that federal assistance be given to small investors in the CNMI, and that the recommendation to reexamine the Covenant be taken out. McPhee and Richard Conway, the other author of the study, agreed to include the small investor suggestion but did not agree to eliminate the recommendation to re-examine the Covenant, a recommendation that the Fitial administration has publicly said they oppose.

Also, McPhee said he and Conway saw nothing wrong with the administration using the study to support the CNMI's federalization lawsuit.

"We had no say in how our client would use the report. We would only have objection to misuse or distortion of the work," he wrote.

The authors first learned the CNMI was considering a lawsuit March 28 or 29, 2008, at a meeting with CNMI officials, McPhee said, adding that discussions of the project had been taking place since November 2006, when the Office of Insular Affairs gave the CNMI a grant to conduct the study.

McPhee in his letter to the senators said a serious misunderstanding of the report was reflected in many of the senators' questions.

"This was that we had only offered one scenario and that was the worst case scenario," McPhee said. "This is simply false. We did offer a Federalization Scenario which was a pessimistic one, but it was not the only one. We also offered a Relief Scenario which was quite favorable and suggested a possible path to recovery by 2015."

Moreover, the senators missed that the report showed the potential effects of federalization on labor could prevent economic recovery in the CNMI for the foreseeable future, he said.

The authors limited the study to these two scenarios because, MePhee said, "they essentially represent the only two paths facing the CNMI economy in the future. In other words, while many things will influence the course of the economy, the most important one is Congress' decision on federalization."

Moreover, he said they could have presented different scenarios based on the extension of the transitional foreign worker program but they would have only been variations of the federalization scenario.

McPhee answers some of the inconsistencies in the data reported in the study, one of which was two differing population figures.

The Economic Impact report states that in 2005 the CNMI population was 70,200 using a mid-year estimate-4,273 more than was reported in the CNMI Household Income and Expenditures Survey.

"When these estimates were reviewed by CNMI analysts, it was pointed out that the 2005 HIES estimate was probably too low, as it was at odds with figures produced by the LIDS system. We therefore adopted a higher number for 2005 and re-estimated the rest of the population series," he wrote.

McPhee ends his response by admitting that gathering data for the report was difficult, as it was in 1999 when the two conducted a similar study.

"When I was asked to participate in the second study, I knew that the scarcity of economic data for the CNMI would be a problem. I was tempted to decline the offer, contending that a comprehensive and defensible analysis of the CNMI economy was infeasible because of the lack of information. This was essentially the position taken by the U.S. Government Accountability Office and the U.S. Department of Labor," he said.

But, he added, he decided to take on the project because he knew without a study of this nature the CNMI would continue to lack information on the impact of the two major issues facing the Commonwealth—the loss of the apparel industry and the potential impact of federalization.

YANA

From Page 1

Govendo allowed Yana and Atalig out from jail until the next hearing on Jan. 28 at 9am.

"I'm going to give them more than a week. This will end on Jan. 28," the judge stressed.

Govendo continued the hearing after Yana requested for at least one week for him to explain in detail how he spent his attorney's fees based on the checks that he issued.

Atalig, through counsel Douglas Cushnie, also pointed out that they did not receive any written objection to their submission statement of the fees. Cushnie said the written objection will allow them to respond accordingly.

Attorney Stephen Nutting, counsel for some of the Malite heirs, told *Saipan Tribune* after the hearing that in the last hearing Govendo really gave Yana and Atalig the opportunity to come back that day, Friday, to explain their fees.

Nutting said the two lawyers at the last hearing stated they wanted to bring an attorney to represent them so they could present their side of the case.

"Essentially it appears there was not much presented, but the court continued it for one more time to allow them one final opportunity to try to explain many of the problems," Nutting said.

He said Govendo has already shown himself to be somewhat skeptical of the fees as they were billed because of the amount of hours that were done and very few documents that were submitted to the court as filing to support those billings.

"I think the court is going to make a decision of whether or not Mr. Atalig and Mr. Yana are entitled to any fees as a result of those excessive billings," Nutting said.

Nutting pointed to a CNMI Supreme Court's previous ruling that determined that an attorney submitting an excessive bill is not entitled to any fees whatsoever because to do otherwise would encourage lawyers to submit excessive bills just hoping that the judge might reduce that is something more reasonable.

"So the only way to deter attorney from doing that some sort of thing is to deny the fees altogether. And it is our hope that what this court will do," he added.

Cushnie in an interview said his role was to represent Atalig under the situation regarding attorney's fees.

Cushnie said he told the court that he wants specific determinations and to have opposing counsel point out specifically where are the problems was with the fees.

"Mr. Atalig submitted a written statement determination, multi-page, and that if there is a judgment as to any particular item we would like to know the objection to that item so that we can respond," he said.

At Friday's hearing, Govendo read numerous "questionable items" that appeared in Atalig's report on the hours the lawyer apparently spent in the Malite probate.

Among the items raised by Govendo was the 10 hours that Atalig billed for just filing papers in court.

"Ten hours just to walk to the court?" the stunned judge asked as he continued reading more items in the report.

Nutting also raised many items in the hourly billings that according to him were "too excessive."

Govendo even stated that Atalig, an attorney of law, can't even spell correctly the word "dismissed" as repeatedly shown in Atalig's submission.

With respect to Yana, the judge asked him if he wants Nutting, who was able to produce a copy of the checks that Yana issued, to tell the court the details how the checks were spent.

Yana said now that he knows the dates of the checks issued he just need more time to remember how the money were spent.

Atalig has submitted to the court a report showing that from 1995 to 2007 he provided legal services in the Malite estate for a total of 6,108 hours or equivalent to $2.1 million in attorney's fees.

Atalig's statement indicated that from 1995 to 2000 he spent 1,208.5 hours or $271,912.50 in attorney's fees.

The lawyer claimed that from 2001 to 2007, his hours rendered reach 4,899.5 or $271,912.50 in attorney's fees.

The combined total amount is $2,109,225.

Atalig and Yana, who assisted him in the probate, have been in jail for nine months since March 2008 when Govendo found them in civil contempt for failing to return the $1.3 million they got as attorneys' fees in the Malite probate.

During the Jan. 5 hearing, Govendo ordered the temporary release of the two lawyers from detention until Friday's hearing, Jan. 16.

GTC Elementary extending school hours

Beginning tomorrow, students at Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School will be experiencing longer school days.

School has been extended for one hour and will now end at 3:20pm, said acting GTC principal Charlotte Camacho.

The extension is initially to make up hours missed for Education Day, which took place in November.

But the new hours will last for the rest of the school year in order for the students to finish classes by May 30. The other public schools are scheduled to end the year in the middle of June. GTC will end earlier in order to begin termite treatment on some of the classrooms, the principal said.

The additional time will make a long day, Camacho said.

"It's going to be a long day. We're telling parents please make sure they eat that breakfast and have a snack," she said." We are going to make sure they're eating their lunch. I know it's going to be an adjustment," adding that teachers will also feel the change. New buses are supposed to be arriving soon, so students will be able to use those, she said.

There is a change that the funding will not come through for this school year, and, if that is the case, Camacho said she would revert to the old schedule. She should know by the end of the month. ***(Kristi Eaton)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

DEQ brigade sets COP cleanup

The Division of Environmental Quality cleanup brigade will be picking up trash at Coral Ocean Point (Unai Dangkulo) on Feb. 7.

Thos who would like to volunteer may join the group on Saturday, Feb. 7, at 8am. Volunteers will clean until 10am and break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 monthly cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participated in at least three cleanups will receive a green brigade t-shirt.

The DEQ cleanup brigade began in 1996 and continues to maintain clean, healthy beaches.

For more information about volunteering, contact the DEQ office at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

Marianas High School schedule

Jan. 19 No classes (Martine Luther King Day)
Jan. 29 3rd-4th Period Exams
Jan. 30 1st-2nd Period Exams
Feb. 2 No classes (PSS Professional Development)
Feb. 11 2nd Quarter Report Card Day/Open House, 4pm-6pm (student released at 1pm, parents pick up report cards from Homeroom teachers)
Feb. 16 No classes (President's Day)
Feb. 17 No classes (PSS Professional Development)
Feb. 27 Cultural Day, 9am-3pm MHS Campus, Open to the public

For questions and concerns, contact 237-3206. ***(PR)***

Deadline set for filing quarterly tax returns

The Division of Revenue and Taxation is reminding all CNMI residents that the 2008 4th Quarter deadline for filing the quarterly tax returns is Monday, Feb. 2, 2009. The Division of Revenue and Taxation will be open from 7:30am to 6:30pm on Monday Feb. 2, 2009. The office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation is located at the Joeten DanDan Commercial Center. For more information call 664-1000, 664-1034 Compliance Branch, or 664-1065 Collection Branch. ***(PR)***

Vendors needed for Puengin Inetnon

The Kagman Community Association is looking for interested vendors to sell food, drinks, arts, crafts, clothing, produce, snacks, or other items at Puengin Inetnon. Puengin Inetnon is Chamorro for "A Night of Gathering". Puengin Inetnon will be Kagman's Friday Night Market and will be held every government payday Friday outside the Kagman Community Center. More vendors are needed. Call the Kagman Post Office at 256-POST for more info. ***(PR)***

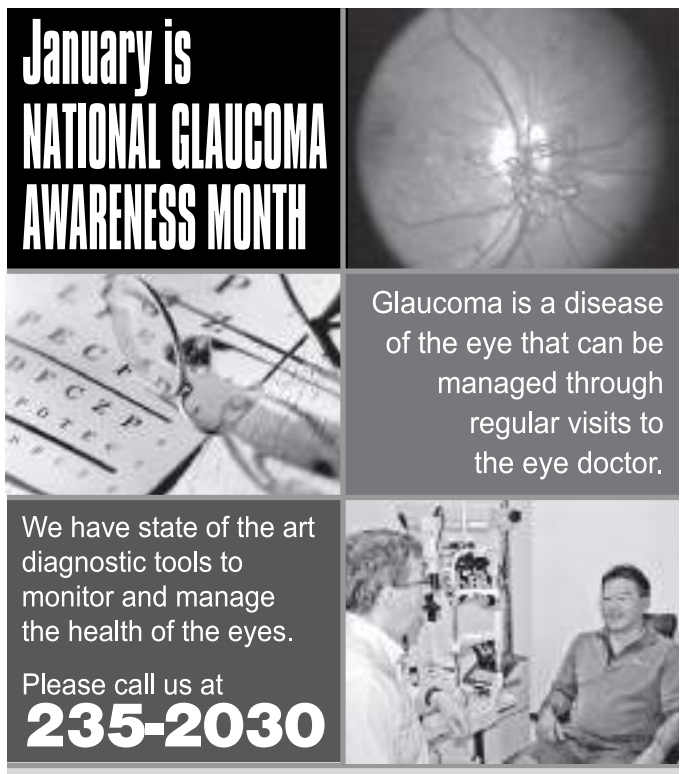
Attention to families with disabilities on Rota

The Family Hope Center under the CNMI Council for Developmental Disabilities and Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc. would like to inform the community that the System Navigators would be traveling to Rota to conduct interviews and follow up(s) with families with disabilities on Jan. 22-23, 2009.

We are encouraging families with disabilities on Rota to contact NMPASI at 234-7273/4 for Frances Torres or Dorian Camacho or CNMI DD Council for Lillian Ada at 664-7005/7000 or cell phone no. 287-5643 for an appointment. ***(PR)***

MLK DAY schedule

Jan. 19 Martin Luther King Day
Forum: 1pm - 2pm;
Mini-March: 3pm - 4pm;
Program includes essay/speech finalists and keynote: 4pm - 6pm
Jan. 20 Workshops at schools on Saipan
Jan. 21 "Fulfilling the Dream" Inaugural Celebration Dinner; $15; Bud's Bar; 6pm-8pm. ***(PR)***


January is
NATIONAL GLAUCOMA
AWARENESS MONTH
Glaucoma is a disease of the eye that can be managed through regular visits to the eye doctor.
We have state of the art diagnostic tools to monitor and manage the health of the eyes.
Please call us at
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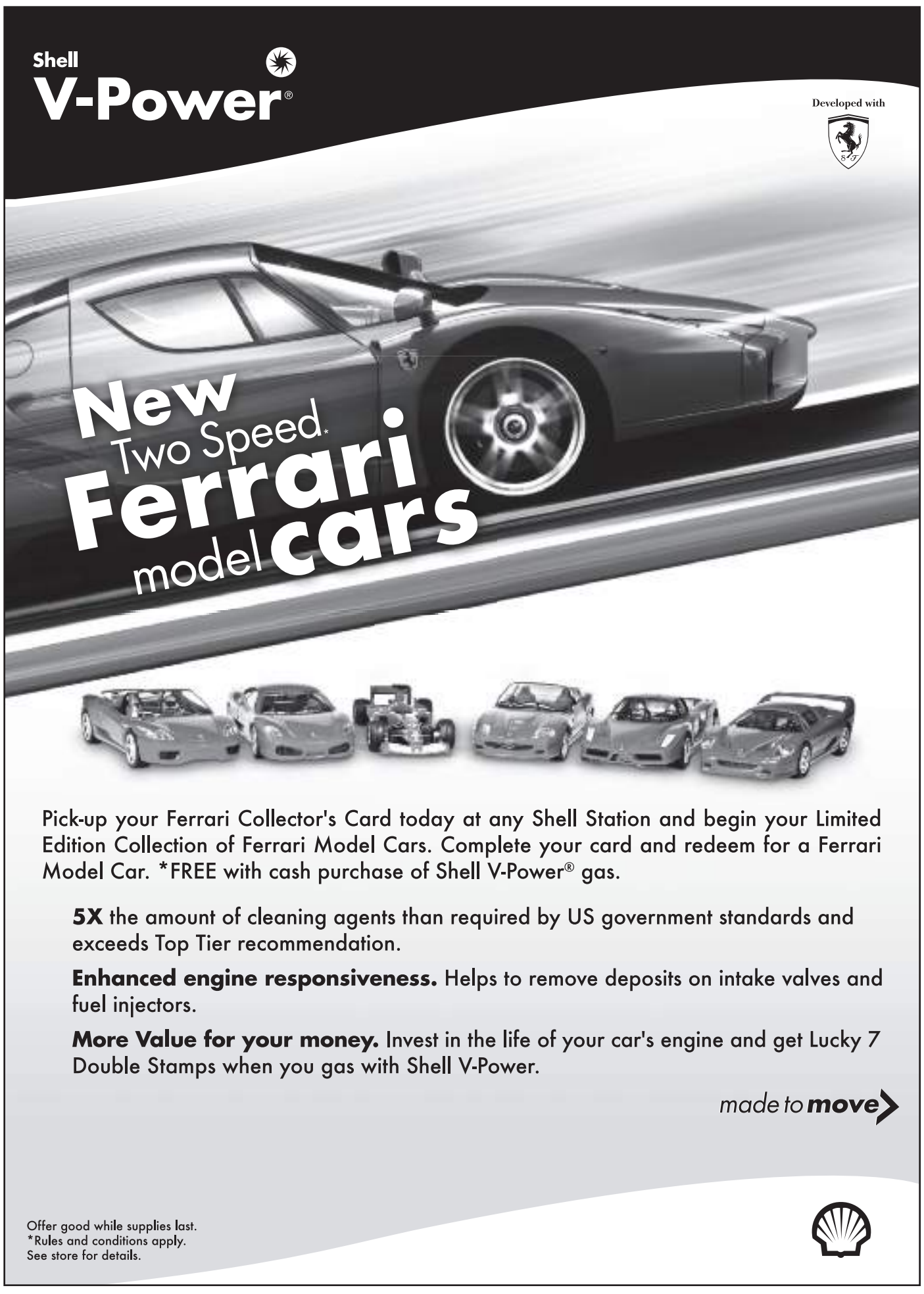
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Two Speed*
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Pick-up your Ferrari Collector's Card today at any Shell Station and begin your Limited Edition Collection of Ferrari Model Cars. Complete your card and redeem for a Ferrari Model Car. *FREE with cash purchase of Shell V-Power® gas.
5X the amount of cleaning agents than required by US government standards and exceeds Top Tier recommendation.
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More Value for your money. Invest in the life of your car's engine and get Lucky 7 Double Stamps when you gas with Shell V-Power.
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Offer good while supplies last.
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See store for details.

Operator of alleged illegal casino gets 3 years probation

Judge Govendo tells businessman not to listen to ex-politicians

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

One of two businessmen accused as operators of an illegal casino in western Garapan in 2007 entered a plea of "no contest" yesterday and was sentenced to three years of probation.

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo accepted Byoong Seob Choi's plea of "no contest" to two counts of illegal use of nonresident workers in an unlawful enterprise.

Following a plea agreement, Govendo sentenced Choi to three years in jail, all suspended.

The judge placed the businessman on one year of supervised probation and two years of unsupervised probation.

Govendo ordered Choi to pay a $4,000 fine and forfeited the $11,933 cash, gambling tables, and other gambling paraphernalia seized by authorities during the raid on Aug. 24, 2008.

The judge told Choi to seek attorney's advice and not to listen to former politicians before getting involved in a controversial industry like gambling.

"Don't listen to former politicians!" said Govendo as he advised Choi to talk to his counsel, Michael Dotts, before hiring some aliens in doing business.

Former Gov. Froilan C. Tenorio was among some former politicians implicated by the Attorney General's Office in that alleged illegal casino operation. Tenorio, however, was never charged.

The Attorney General's Office charged Choi and Hideo Kato with 119 counts for illegal gambling and using alien workers in an unlawful enterprise.

For entering a "no contest" to two counts, the remaining charges against Choi were dismissed as part of the plea agreement.

Dotts told *Saipan Tribune* that his client disputed that he was guilty because he was led to believe and his understanding was everything he did was correct and lawful.

"No contest means you don't admit that what you did was wrong but you are agreeing not to contest the government and he did that in exchange for plea agreement," Dotts said.

The lawyer said the defendants were basically told by people who they thought they could trust that everything was legal.

"In fact they had advertisement for the Victoria casino. They had a big banner in front. On one occasion somebody gambling didn't pay the gambling debt. These guys (defendants) actually called the Department of Public Safety to come and arrest the gambler," Dotts said.

"So if you think it's an illegal gambling, you would not call DPS to come and help you with somebody not paying the gambling debt," he added.

Attorney General's Investigative Unit agents raided the alleged illegal casino establishment located on the ground floor or the Victoria Hotel in Garapan on Aug. 24, 2007.

ALL AGAINST CRIME FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Timoth P. Villagomez pose with Crime Stoppers' officials and supporters, as well as members from different local and federal law enforcement agencies during last Thursday's proclamation when Fitial declared January as CNMI Crime Stoppers Program Month.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB09-GOV-043
(1/20/09)

SUBMISSION DATE: FEBRUARY 12, 2009 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PROCUREMENT OF A FORKLIFT FOR THE CNMI WATER TASK FORCE"

A COPY OF THE SPECIFICATION MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWER BASE, SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO U.S. CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ TIMOTHY P. VILLAGOMEZ
LT. GOVERNOR

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

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San Jose, Saipan MP 96950
Phone (670) 234-8801/235-5466

PUBLIC NOTICE

APPLICATION FOR CNMI WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION

The Antidegradation Policy of the Water Quality Standards of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands states that the protection and maintenance of the quality of the waters of the Commonwealth are an historic and legal right of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, and that this shall be the public policy of the Commonwealth. Any proposed activity that will impact the waters of the Commonwealth must receive a Water Quality Certification from the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ). In issuing a Water Quality Certification, DEQ must assure that the proposed activity complies with all applicable provisions of the CNMI Water Quality Standards and federal Clean Water Act, will not interfere with the attainment or maintenance of the existing or designated uses of the Commonwealth waters, and that all appropriate and practicable steps have been taken to minimize potential adverse impacts to aquatic life and human health.

Upon receiving an application, DEQ issues a public notification which describes the proposed activity and potential impacts on water quality, aquatic life and human health. A thirty (30) day public comment period will commence from the date of the first publication of the notice.

The Director of DEQ may conduct a public hearing to solicit comments on the application if a hearing is requested by the public. DEQ will make a determination for issuing a Water Quality Certification based upon a complete technical review of the application and the public comments received.

DEQ is soliciting comments on the following application for a CNMI Water Quality Certification.

1. APPLICANT: CNMI Department of Public Works
Mr. Diego Songsong, Secretary
Joeten Gualo Rai Center
Saipan, MP 96950

2. APPLICABLE STATUTORY AUTHORITY: CNMI Commonwealth Environmental Protection Act (Public Law No. 3-23); CNMI Water Quality Standards, Parts 3 and 10 (Commonwealth Register Vol. 26 No. 09, September 24, 2004).

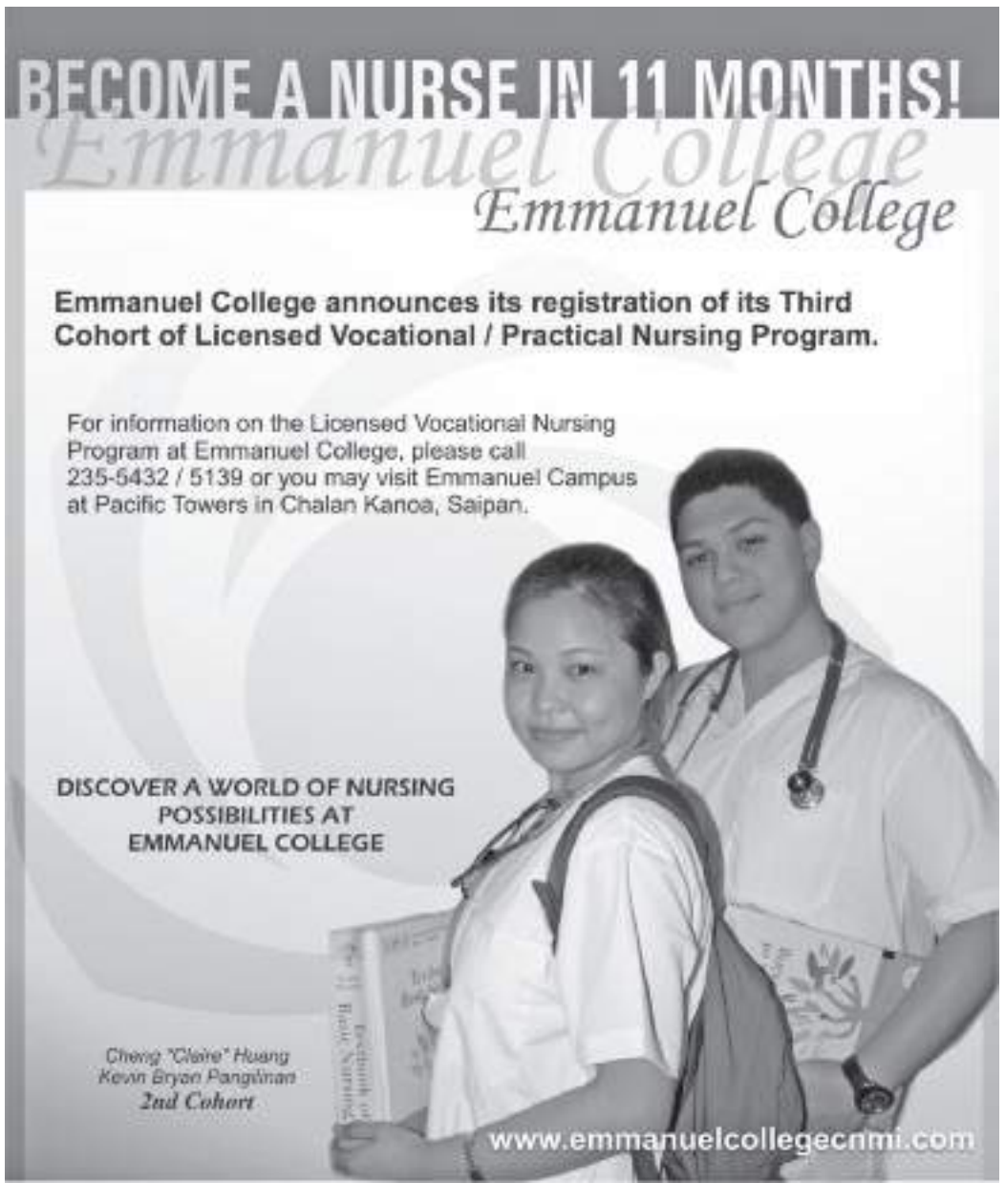
3. LOCATION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY: Puerto Rico Dump, located in the Puerto Rico area of Saipan, CNMI.

4. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY: The project is comprised of two main components: (1) land clearing, subsequent topographical re-sculpturing of the dump site to final design elevations; installation of a HDPE geomembrane "cap"; and re-planting the site with grass for use as a passive public park, and (2) construction of a rock rip-rap shoreline protection structure along the northwest and southwest sides of the dump site that border Saipan Lagoon.

5. IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTION: The proposed rock rip-rap shoreline protection structure would potentially cover an estimated 96,350 ft2 area of marine habitats. Affected marine habitats that may be affected along the south west side include: inter-tidal mudflats (0.24 acres); Enhalus seagrass (0.002 acres); mangrove wetland (0.1 acres) and shallow sandy bottom habitat (0.99 acres). Marine habitats found fronting the dump's northwest boundary were comprised of coral communities (9 genera) and scattered algae species. Construction related activities will kill non-mobile or slow moving organisms. Once construction is completed, however, an overall improvement to water quality within the harbor and adjacent lagoon areas is expected due the effect of the cap (HDPE liner) significantly reducing the quantity of leachate that is generated and discharged from the dump.

6. PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES: Silt curtains will be utilized to minimize the spread of the sediment plume. The applicant will monitor water quality as required by the certification, if issued, to ensure proper operation of the silt curtains. The recently promulgated (April 2008) required compensatory mitigation plans {FR 73(70)} will be developed in coordination with local and federal agencies and implemented in accordance with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit, if issued. The applicant will work with DEQ during the project to identify any other reasonable mitigative measures that may become necessary.

Written comments and inquires should be submitted to DEQ within thirty (30) days of the first date of publication of this notice. Please mail comments to Director, Division of Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950.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Emmanuel College announces its registration of its Third Cohort of Licensed Vocational / Practical Nursing Program.
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Kevin Bryan Panglinan
2nd Cohort
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BoG hosts TV commercial contest

High school and college students eligible for cash prizes; due March 13

HAGATNA, Guam—The Bank of Guam is proud to announce a competition to select broadcast quality 30-second commercials to be used by the bank.

Contest guidelines are as follows:

Theme: Meeting the financial needs of our community

Categories: 1) Savings Accounts, 2) Consumer Loans/ Credit Cards.

Bonus Category: Bank of Guam image

Medium: Submissions must be no more than 26 seconds in length. Entries must be submitted on a CD/DVD and must be of broadcast quality

Eligibility: Open to all high school and college/university students throughout Guam, the CNMI, Republic of Belau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Entries may be submitted by an individual or a group

Enrollment includes the registration form, release of commercial agreement and model/ image(s) release form.

Cash prizes will be awarded as follows: $2,000, first prize; $1,000, second prize; $500, third prize; and $500 bonus category prize.

Entry forms are available at all high schools, the University of Guam, Guam Community College, NMI College, Palau Community College, College of Micronesia, and Bank of Guam branches and its website www.bankofguam.com

For more information, please contact Kebrina Duenas at 472-5236 or email at kebrina.duenas@bankofguam.com. ***(BoG)***

LPG PRICE CUT

Wushin Corp. slashed prices of its liquefied petroleum gas product Friday by $0.23 per gallon. The company said they are making the price cut after its main supplier in Guam also slashed its price of LPG.

MARK RABAGO

US Coast Guard leads search for missing Big Island glider

HONOLULU—The U.S. Coast Guard, Hawaii County Fire Department, Civil Air Patrol and Good Samaritans are searching with air assets today for a missing man who was last seen Friday piloting a glider plane near the peaks of Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa on the Big Island.

According to friends and witnesses, Dave Bigelo was piloting his glider plane near Mauna Kea in an effort to set a high altitude record and was scheduled to land at Waimea-Kohala Airport after the flight yesterday afternoon.

The glider was airborne mid-morning, but Bigelo has not been heard from since approximately 2 p.m. Friday. The glider was reported missing to the Coast Guard several hours later.

At first light today, a C-130 search plane crew from Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point was launched from Oahu and arrived on scene near Mauna Kea at 7:45 a.m.

The Coast Guard is concentrating search efforts in the areas of the intended flight path and areas around the plane's last reported position -- near the two peaks of the Big Island.

This morning, Coast Guard pilots reported good visibility at altitude and near the peaks of the mountains, but poor visibility at lower elevations.

No sign of Bigelo or his missing glider has been reported. The Coast Guard urges anyone with information to call its Honolulu Joint Rescue Coordination Center at 808-535-3333.

"We are in close coordination with Hawaii County rescuers and we urge anyone with information to call and help us focus the search," said Lt. Danielle Renoud. "Weather is a factor right now but we are hopeful conditions will continue to improve." ***(USCG)***

Northern Mariana Islands
RETIREMENT FUND
"Investing For The Future Financial Security Of Our Members"

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NO. RF09-055

OFFICE SPACE RENTAL – TINIAN

OPENING DATE: December 23, 2008 **CLOSING DATE: January 22, 2009**

INTERESTED PARTIES MAY PICK UP THE SPECIFICATIONS AT THE NMI RETIREMENT FUND OFFICE ON TINIAN, LOCATED IN SAN JOSE VILLAGE, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS (8:00 A.M. TO 5:00 P.M., MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, EXCEPT CNMI HOLIDAYS).

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Only $99
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-husband
"NO. I want to wait for Valentine's Day!"
-wife
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Offer good only from January 16, 2009 to February 28, 2009. Conditions apply.

Interior and Commerce submit draft legislation to conserve oceanic birds

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Department of the Interior and the Department of Commerce recently forwarded to Congress for consideration draft legislation titled the "Albatross and Petrel Conservation Act of 2009" to protect certain oceanic birds.

"The albatross and the petrel soar and glide, sometimes tens of thousands of miles each year. Though remarkably resilient, these majestic, well-traveled ocean wanderers face increasing threats to their survival," said Deputy Secretary of the Interior Lynn Scarlett. "Today, we transmit to the Congress draft legislation to implement the 'Agreement for the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels' that, if passed by the Congress, will help to secure their future."

This important international agreement entered into force on Feb. 1, 2004. On Sept. 26, 2008, President Bush transmitted the agreement to the U.S. Senate, recommending that it give its advice and consent to United States accession.

The draft legislation provides the United States, primarily through the Departments of the Interior and Commerce, with authority to adopt and implement conservation and management measures to address the most pressing threats to albatrosses and petrels in the wild, including habitat disturbance, nesting habitat degradation and loss, changes in food supply, pollution and marine debris, impacts from non-native species, and the incidental bycatch of birds in fisheries. ***(PR)***

DEPLOYING TO AFGHANISTAN

To our son Sgt. Willy Duenas who is deploying to Afghanistan, "May God be with you always. You will always be in our thoughts and prayers. Take care and we will be waiting for your safe return." From your Mom Rowena, Daddy Pete, brothers Michael and Jun & sister Girlie.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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There's only one thing better than being able to bank when, where and how you choose. And that's being able to do it for free, with Bank of Hawaii Free Checking.[1] To sign up for your Free Checking just visit any Bank of Hawaii branch today. And now, when you open a Bank of Hawaii Free Checking account and sign up for direct deposit, we'll give you a $20 Shell Gift Certificate.[2]
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We're proud to be a local sponsor of
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Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

January 19, 1999

902 talks begin

Crucial meetings under Section 702 of the Covenant open today between the Northern Marianas and the United States with little prospects that the two sides could make progress in closing wide gaps on how problems on local immigration and labor should be resolved. Both sides failed to hammer out a common agenda prior to the opening of the four-day "informal" discussions, and local officials preferred that specific talking points be discussed when they convene this morning at the Hyatt. President Bill Clinton's special representative to the bilateral talks, Edward B. Cohen, suggested in an interview last night that the local government did not oppose Washington's proposal to discuss transition.

NMC seeks scholarship fund boost

The Northern Marianas College yesterday sought assistance from the legislature to funnel more than $500,000 in government funds into a critical scholarship program for some 530 students enrolled this spring semester. College officials met with some members from the Senate and the House of Representatives to lobby for additional money in a bid to shore up the rapidly depleting funds in light of a budget cut implemented by the Tenorio administration for the second quarter. NMC, led by its President Agnes M. McPhetres, expressed concern over a recent decision by the administration not to allocate funds into the program—a move which may imperil the education of close to 530 students attending CNMI's lone higher educational institution.

January 19, 2000

Teno, legislators forge new partnership

In efforts to enhance working relationship between the two branches of the government, lawmakers met with Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday to tackle an array of issues that the Legislature hopes to enact when sessions begin in the next few weeks. Leaders of the Senate and the House of Representatives also commenced what they said is a regular weekly meeting aimed at facilitating passage of legislation in each of the two chambers. Among the issues discussed were the forthcoming measures amending local labor laws and investment requirements as well as proposals on 2000 fiscal budget telecommunications regulatory body, election reforms and other legislative concerns. Mr. Tenorio described the meeting as a "get together" in order to foster close cooperation between the two branches of government to address critical issues confronting the island.

Banks may intensify lending

Due to the improving visitor arrival figures and increasing business activity, banking institutions in the island may start relaxing self-imposed restrictions on commercial and consumer loans. The two-year old economic crisis have forced banks to slowdown on giving out loans due to the apparently crippled capabilities of borrowers to pay back. Development Authority Chair John S. Tenorio said commercial banks normally adapt a more cautious, conservative approach on approving loan applications during times when the economy is not doing well. Mr. Tenorio said private banks have frozen expansion on their respective lending base when the local economy was not showing significant signs of improvement or when borrowers' capability to repay loans is weaker.

January 19, 2001

Ichihara is Borja's lieutenant governor

After months of searching for a running mate in the November elections, Democratic Party gubernatorial candidate Jesse C. Borja yesterday announced that educator Brigida DLG Ichihara has been chosen by the party's credentials committee to run for lt. governor. Mr. Borja said the long and impressive record of Ms. Ichihara as an educator will prove her capability to handle the job. "My running mate is exceptionally qualified to be the candidate for lieutenant governor." She has the experience and education, her dedication and commitment are beyond question and she has the required desire to help our children, our people and our commonwealth, he said.

Army of pro-life advocates to march against abortion

A least 1,500 members of various organizations, students and Church leaders are expected to participate in a prayer vigil on Sunday to strongly oppose abortion practices on the island. The Christians for Life, a group of Churches and organizations in the Commonwealth have established themselves to speak out for the unborn, following recent reports on continued increase of abortion-related activities in various areas of the CNMI.

Pacific

Fiji floods leave people at risk of malaria and other illnesses

SUVA, Fiji (AP)—Fiji's worst flooding in a generation has put tens of thousands of people at risk of respiratory illnesses, malaria and dengue fever, authorities warned Friday, after heavy rains killed 11 and left thousands homeless.

Hundreds of homes and businesses in towns and villages on the main island of Viti Levu have been inundated in waist-deep water from overflowing rivers and streams. Clean drinking water is scarce in some places, and stagnant water increases the risk of exposure to mosquito-borne diseases like malaria and dengue fever.

Joeli Cawaki, National Disaster Management Office director, told The Associated Press that it will take time for flood waters to recede and in the meantime there is a fear of disease outbreaks.

Medical authorities have already reported 85 people, including six babies, with diarrhea and respiratory illnesses at one emergency shelter in the country's battered western region.

More than 9,000 people are in evacuation centers—many without food, clean water, clothes or other possessions—after a week of torrential storms triggered the worst flooding in 40 years.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Ratu Isoa Gavidi said there is "a desperate need" for clean drinking water, water tanks and water purification tablets, as well as clothing, blankets, bedding and tents.

"There are some areas that have no water supplies at all. It could be roughly two to three weeks they will be without water," he told New Zealand's National Radio.

Sereima Koli, 37, a resident of the main tourist town of Nadi, was quoted as saying on the Fijilive news Web site that she had no clean water for drinking, washing or for sanitation.

"I hope that the authorities start carting water to us soon," she said.

Sugar cane farmers say the storms have wrecked tens of millions of dollars of crops in an industry that provides incomes for one in four workers in the island nation. Merchants in Nadi estimated 200 million Fiji dollars ($110 million) in damage.

Fiji Chamber of Commerce president, Swani Maharaj, said businesses in Nadi will take six months to a year to recover from the floods, "but I'm sure a lot of the smaller ones will probably never (re)open."

Later Friday, Australia and New Zealand gave a combined $2.3 million to fund flood relief work in Fiji, adding to the $150,000 of initial funding they announced Wednesday. The U.S., China, Japan, Tonga and UNICEF have also pledged emergency funding.

AP

Fijian villagers paddle through their flooded village of Wailotua in Fiji after its worst flooding in a generation killed nine people, forced thousands to flee swamped homes and stranded foreign tourists, Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2009. Tourists

PACIFIC BRIEFS

Future of Samoa auto parts factory in doubt

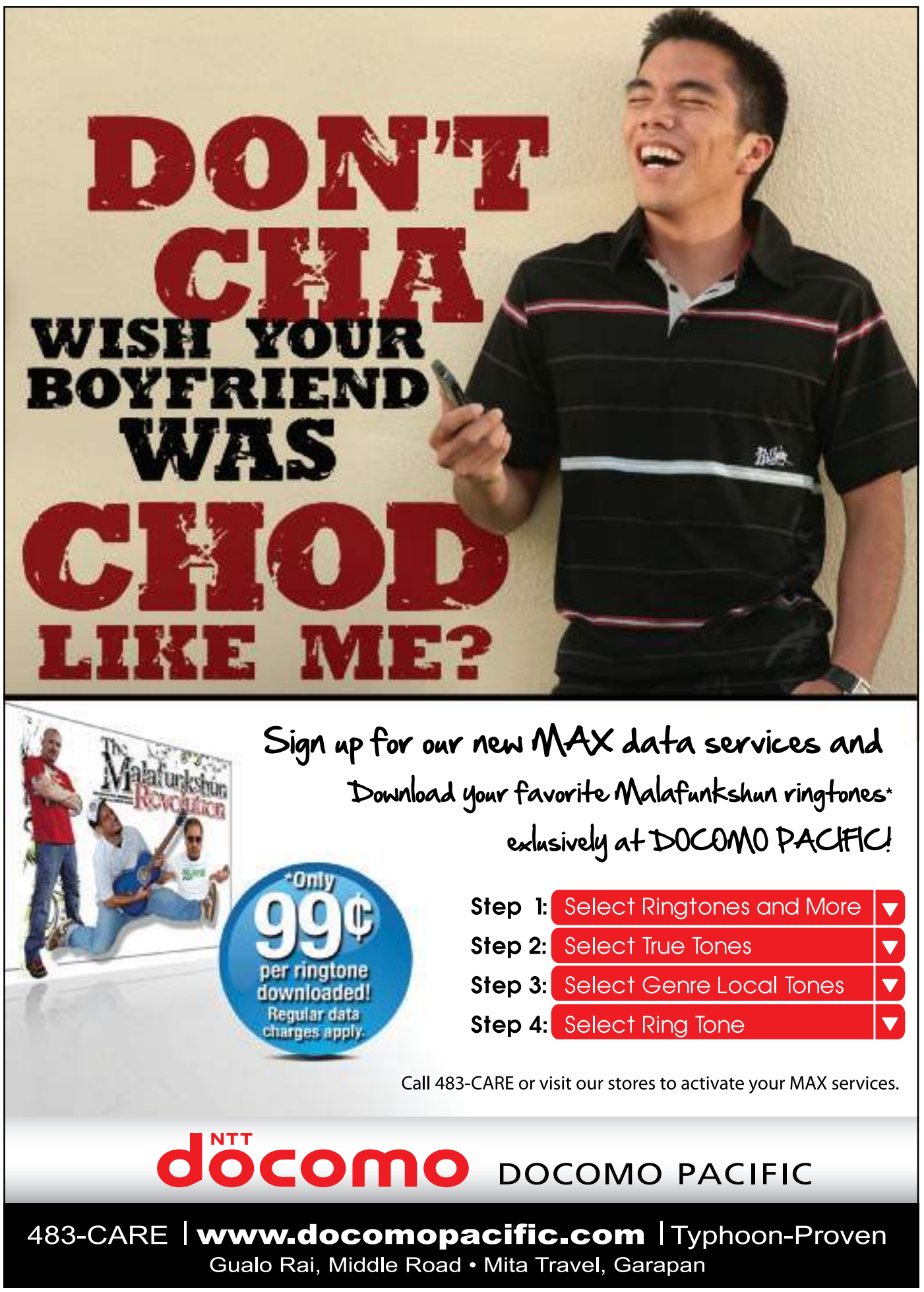
APIA, Samoa (Samoa Observer)—The Australian counterpart of Yazaki Samoa is unsure what the future holds for Yazaki's operations here, RNZI [Radio New Zealand International] has reported. The company says a reduction of staff hours to its Samoan workforce is a short-term solution to ease the effects of the global economic downturn to its operation here. About 1,500 employees will have their hours cut from 40 to 32 over the next nine weeks as a result of an 18 percent drop in overseas automotive manufacturing orders. The deputy general-manager of Australian Arrow Proprietary Limited, formerly known as Yazaki Australia, is Craig O'Donohue. He says it's unsure what the future holds for its operation in Samoa. "All businesses involved in the automotive industry are (taking) a very hard look at their future," he said. "And the problem nobody knows, it's out of our control it sort of stems right back to the financial meltdown as such on a global economic scale. "It's nothing that any automotive industry can really forecast with any great confidence. That's why we've got to manage it, not on a day by day but you know just on an on-going basis."

Vanuatu bus fare increase prompts walkers

PORT VILA, Vanuatu (Vanuatu Daily Post)—The current increase in bus fares, which came into effect on January 1, has seriously affected many commuters in Port Vila. The increase has no doubt given no choice for many workers and families who must now walk to work or school. But for many, walking is a silent protest to the Land Transport Board and the Government against the new fares and only time will tell if they will continue. When the adult fare was Vt100 [US$0.91] some had been spending Vt200 [US$1.82] daily, which was expensive, but affordable. They suddenly now have to pay Vt300 [US$2.73] on a daily basis. Daily Post caught up with some commuters, most of whom shared similar concerns. Eva Avock Joely, an average working mother who lives in Ohlen told Daily Post that the new bus fare has affected her family because now they have to spend almost Vt100 for school pupils alone, which is similar to what an adult used to pay in the past. "In the past we used to spend less but now it's doubled what we spent as some of the bus drivers are even charging our children Vt100 instead of Vt70. "It's very expensive for my family," she said.

Ancient dwellings mapped in American Samoa

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa (Samoa News)—Vatia villagers in American Samoa have always known these sites that lie inside the National Park, exist on Faiga ridge in Vatia. Led by NPS archaeologist Epifania Suafo'a-Taua'i, National Park Service staff, along with congressional candidate Aumua Amata visited the area on Friday, Jan. 9, 2009. The purpose of the hike was to record coordinates of the house sites, graves, grinding stones and pigeon-snaring star mounds - to map the finds for Global Positioning Systems (GIS) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The sites will be added to the national database of the U.S. National Park Service, under which the local park comes. Determining how old the sites are will come later. A look at the largest of about 25 ancient Samoan house sites found that measure 25 meters (about 82 feet) by 17 meters (56 feet).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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Beyond Gaza

Barack Obama is not yet president, but he is already having a gravitational effect on the conflict in Gaza. Egypt, the Bush administration and, above all, Israel appear eager to bring the fighting to a conclusion before Tuesday. Friday Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni flew to Washington to sign a showy—if somewhat vague—agreement with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice about the interdiction of future arms smuggling to Gaza. Israel may sign a similar deal with Egypt over the weekend.

The principal holdup to a cease-fire remains Hamas, whose Iranian-sponsored leadership has no interest in sparing Obama from a Middle East crisis. Despite three weeks of pounding by the Israeli army, Hamas continues to fire dozens of rockets a day at Israeli cities, and Friday its Damascus-based leader publicly rejected Israel's cease-fire terms. That means that Israel's leadership, which has been divided over how far to press its military offensive, may soon have to choose between unilaterally declaring an end to the fighting and another escalation that would draw the Obama administration into a Gaza quagmire on its first day.

Whether or not the Gaza fight has ended, Obama has promised a quick start by his administration on Middle East diplomacy. In a meeting with The Post's editorial board on Thursday, Obama said that he didn't believe his administration would "have that luxury" of standing back from the deteriorating situation. Yet the president-elect appeared to have a healthy appreciation of the limits of what U.S. diplomacy might be able to accomplish. "That doesn't mean we close a deal or we have some big, grand ... Camp David-type event early in my administration," he said. "The notion is not that the United States can dictate the terms of an agreement."

Obama pointed out that "most people have a pretty good sense about what the outlines of a compromise would be." The problem is political weakness on both sides. So, he said, his aim would be "to provide a space where trust can be built"; he cited the suggestion of former British prime minister Tony Blair "to build some concrete deliverables that people can see," such as greater security for Israelis and economic benefits for Palestinians.

This is sensible thinking; it is also much harder than it sounds, as Blair has discovered in his role as envoy to the region. The incremental approach Obama is describing won't work unless Israelis and Palestinians are convinced that the president is truly committed to achieving a two-state settlement. One way Obama can convince them is by sending a clear message before Israel's upcoming election that he will expect the new government to negotiate seriously with the Palestinian Authority about issues such as the borders of a new state, the disposition of Jerusalem and a solution for Palestinian refugees. He should insist that the next prime minister follow Israel's own laws and commitments in curbing Jewish settlement activity in the West Bank. And he should make clear that Israel will continue to have U.S. support when it defends itself against the terrorism of Hamas and Hezbollah. Those groups, and their sponsors in Iran and Syria, can be weakened by military means, but a successful peace process will deal them a more crippling blow.

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How to 'unsucceed' in a business/industry on Saipan—Part I

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

Everybody wants to succeed in business. But for some strange reason, most of the businesses that the government is involved in seem to 'unsucceed' (this is my coined word). For many years I have studied how businesses succeed. I have read many books on management and marketing on how to succeed in business. I have spent countless hours discussing business with many winners. I even have taken several courses in business entrepreneurship. But until I came to Saipan, I never understood how to unsucceed in business. Let's run through several examples.

Industry No. 1: Tourism. We started to build a tourism industry over 25 years ago. I recall back in 1984 when I first arrived, about 150,000 tourists were visiting our islands. Most of them were Japanese. Gradually the Japanese market grew until it reached over 700,000. At the end of 2008, the number of tourists was less than 400,000. However many of the Japanese did not stop traveling. They simply bypassed Saipan and flocked to other destinations. Why is that?

The only reason we still managed to get about 400,000 tourists this past year is that we were visited by Chinese, Koreans and Russians. I wonder why the Japanese tourists are not coming here anymore. They certainly have not reduced their traveling. In fact more of them are traveling outside of Japan than before.

Has anyone studied why we lost this market? What did we do to make them not want come here? Were we unfriendly? Were we appreciative of their business? Where did we do wrong? Have we tried in a serious manner to set up a dialogue with the travel agents? Are we still trying to market in the same manner as we did 25 years ago? Will we do the same to the Chinese, Koreans and the Russians? The questions remain unanswered.

Industry No. 2: Garment: We have heard all the horror stories about slave labor of the workers. We are glad the garment industry is gone. They did so much to destroy the clean image of Saipan. Aren't you glad they left? Now we can sit and enjoy the hindsight of our stupidity.

Now that their tax benefits and other contributions to our government and to the island are gone, we have begun to feel the pain. When the containers came in full, they returned full also. Now that the containers that bring food and other commodities return empty, we feel the added cost of shipping. Never mind, we have gotten rid of the nasty bad slave shop garment industry. But….

A funny thing which few of us somehow failed to notice is that when a garment was made in Saipan and sold in America, we received some of the benefits of that sale. We received taxes and other benefits. But now we have none. Instead take a look at what has happened.

Take for example a brand name T-shirt that was made in Saipan. The garment maker here sold the T-shirt for about $2.75 to his buyers. When it was sold to the retail customer in the stores in the United States, the price was anywhere from $75 to $125. Who made the profit? It certainly wasn't the garment maker here.

Now that all the garment makers have gone to foreign countries, let's look at the same T-shirt now made in Vietnam or China instead of previously Saipan. It is made for under $2.75 but is still sold in the stores in the States for $75 to $125. But this time we receive no

See HOW on Next Page

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Still editing? A few tips

By RUSSELL L. RILEY
Special to The Washington Post

Russell L. Riley is chairman of the Presidential Oral History Program at the University of Virginia's Miller Center of Public Affairs.

Barack Obama is surely one of the finest orators ever to appear on the American political stage. But no speech in his past has carried the weight—and the expectations—of a presidential inaugural address. In oral history interviews conducted at the University of Virginia, former presidential speechwriters—both Democrats and Republicans—have reflected on the challenges of crafting, and delivering, the right words at this historic moment. Here are their tips for the president-elect.

1. Don't knock the outgoing guy. Richard M. Nixon's chief speechwriter, Ray Price, recalled that, as he prepared to succeed Lyndon B. Johnson in 1969, Nixon read all the previous addresses. "One comment he made to me was, `It's important not to kick the predecessor,' as he thought Kennedy had done to Eisenhower in saying, `A torch has been passed to a new generation,' " Price said. "He wanted to be very careful that he did not insult Johnson in any way." Price concluded that the inauguration is a time to give voice to what Lincoln called our "better angels." But the fact that Eisenhower (or perhaps Nixon) took offense at JFK's Olympic metaphor is evidence of how sensitive to slight an outgoing administration can be. Jimmy Carter wanted to leave no room for doubt on this score, devoting the very first words of his address to honoring Gerald Ford, whom he had defeated in a bitter contest in 1976. "For myself and for our nation, I want to thank my predecessor for all he has done to heal our land," Carter said.

2. Anticipate the sounds of silence. Great politicians have a finely honed ability to engage an audience from the stump. Bill Clinton delivered speeches that even his own writers said sometimes looked flat on the page but which he could elevate through his natural ability at improvising. Obama's talents for working a crowd are already legendary. But this skill is all but useless at the inauguration because of the size of the "room." Don Baer, a Clinton speechwriter, noted that the inaugural address "is delivered in a big open-air setting, as large ... as any human being ever speaks at." And the crowd is unusually distant from the speaker. So "the impact of the words is very different. You don't get applause. These are politicians, after all. They are used to speaking to large crowds of people who give them back the love." Yet the setting makes this virtually impossible. Moreover, said Ken Khachigian, a speechwriter for Ronald Reagan, "It's cold, so everybody is wearing gloves. When they clap, it's always muffled." Thus, on an occasion of high historical drama, the incoming president is almost completely deprived of the kind of audience feedback that speakers rely on to refine, in the moment, the music of their prose.

3. Beware the staple marks. One of the unavoidable hazards of putting together something as momentous as an inaugural address is the vast army of partisan wordsmiths who will want a piece of the action. Standard procedure for the president-elect is to cast a wide net and invite contributions from a large number of would-be speechwriters, partly to soothe delicate egos but also in hopes of finding some gems to include in a basic speech drafted by an inner circle. (For example, Price was the outside source for one of the most memorable lines of Ronald Reagan's first inaugural, when he said that government "is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem.")

The danger in this process is that it can produce so many good ideas that it swamps the coherence of the speech. Republican speechwriter Aram Bakshian Jr. claims that Nixon's second inaugural suffered precisely this fate. "Unfortunately, Nixon saw some lines here and there that he liked from other speeches," Bakshian said, making his "a roller coaster speech with staple marks where you could almost ... identify things that had been pasted in from other drafts . ... I remember thinking, did someone drop that in by mistake? Did the cleaning lady forget to sweep up?"

4. Take no for an answer. Patrick Anderson recounted that Jimmy Carter wanted to open his 1977 inaugural address with a biblical quote: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." Anderson encouraged Carter to stick with an opening from the Bible but strongly objected to using a passage suggesting that the people who had just elected him, and whose fundamental goodness had been central to his campaign rhetoric, were evil. The president-elect initially defended his choice, arguing with Anderson about original sin. But he ultimately relented when other senior advisers also voiced concerns about how the quote would be interpreted. Sometimes the greatest service a speechwriter can perform is to help the president overcome his own blind spots.

5. Consider the power of nonverbal symbolism. On some memorable occasions, the words of the inaugural address have been punctuated by creative physical symbolism. Carter's commitment to ending the imperial presidency of the Nixon years was underscored by his decision to get out of his car on the inaugural parade route to walk the last few blocks to the White House. This act was remembered long after the words of his address were forgotten. And Reagan's inaugural team took the extraordinary step of moving the entire swearing-in ceremony from the traditional east front of the Capitol to the west side—partly to reinforce Reagan's own Western roots but also because the vistas on the western side are more photogenic and evocative of greatness. To the west, the monuments to Washington and Lincoln provided mute reminders of the possibilities of presidential leadership.

Of course, it may be in the area of nonverbal symbolism that Obama completely trumps even his most accomplished predecessors—simply because of who he is. Just the image of him—the first African American to ascend to the presidency, standing there with his right hand held aloft, his left resting on Abraham Lincoln's Bible—will send a message beyond the powers of any speechwriter to put into words.

Parting shots

By RACHEL DRY
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

President George W. Bush's final curtain call is Tuesday. That's the same day the curtain goes up on President George W. Bush on Broadway, played by Will Ferrell reprising his "Saturday Night Live" role. Adam McKay, Ferrell's longtime collaborator, directed the show, "You're Welcome America: A Final Night with George W. Bush," which will run through March 15. He spoke with Outlook's Rachel Dry about why presidential punch lines are almost always funny and what Barack Obama has in common with Lisa Simpson.

Q: Bush himself seemed in a pretty wisecracking, self-deprecating mood these days, especially in his final news conference last week. What did you think?

A: We were flabbergasted. ... It's not the time or place for any of it. It's sort of like if I burn down my house by falling asleep with a cigarette in bed and then I was being interviewed by the local news and was making jokes.

Q: It's not the time or place for him to be doing it, but it is the time or place for you?

A: We aren't the president. As citizens, there's only a couple things we can do. One of them is to interpret, and the other is to try and laugh a little bit about it because it's been such a brutal eight years. ... That is one hundred percent our job to do that. You don't want the person who's in the middle of everything to be making jokes and be doing fake tap dancing.

Q: Why do this show now?

A: At the end of his presidency, there's this tendency to sweep it under the carpet and move on, but for one night, we wanted to do an overview of the last eight years and have people laugh about it.

Q: So you don't get swept up in a fog of hope and change?

A: You can't move forward unless you understand what's happened. ...Americans are really uncomfortable when people in positions of authority do bad things. We don't like to acknowledge it. We like to smile and kind of push past it, and it's not exactly the best idea. But at least the public can prosecute them to some degree or form opinions about what happened.

Q: But it's going to be funny? In the way that public prosecutions are hilarious?

A: I'm being far more angry than the show is. The show is a mixture—looking back at the last eight years, with silly fictional digressions inspired by Bush. It's incredibly silly and a bit raunchy sometimes.

Q: You've said that the show aims to hold the administration's feet to the fire. How?

A: Well, we're going to talk about some stuff and we're going to laugh. ... I'm not sure about a fire. We're going to hold their feet to the toaster oven, I think.

Q: How will President Obama work as a punch line?

A: It's sort of like how Homer Simpson is the funniest character ever, and Lisa Simpson's not necessarily the funniest character. Obama's an actual adult who knows how to work.

Q: Wait, so Obama is Lisa Simpson?

A: Homer Simpson is crazy funny—a complete idiot and narcissist, and Lisa's the mature one, and she probably gets a laugh once an episode or something. But the very act of making fun of a president is kind of exciting. Right away it's interesting or subversive. ... So, yeah, you can definitely do some funny stuff with Obama. And Joe Biden is kind of a character.

HOW

From Page 10

tax money or any other benefits. So who is benefiting? It seems we shot ourselves in the foot.

When the workers lived and worked here, they spent some of their salaries here. The garment makers paid taxes and bought goods for their workers and their factories. Where are all the benefits now? Does the American buyer benefit? Today where are the 1400 local workers employed in the industry that were fired because of no jobs? Again let's bask in hindsight and smile at how stupid we were in chasing away the golden geese.

Industry No. 3: For an island that aspires to increase its tourist industry and entice investors to come here, we have one of the saddest state of an airline system. The only way one can travel to Guam is on Cape Air or Freedom Air. Both are small local airlines that carry only a few passengers. The only way one can travel to Japan is via Northwest. We are still fortunate to have Asiana Airlines fly us to Korea, if that where we wish to go. But for how long?

What is the real story why Japan Airlines stopped flying here after so many years? Isn't there a connection between the drop in Japanese tourist and the sellout of all Japanese owned hotels as well as the Laolao Golf Resort on Saipan?

Why has Continental Airlines deserted us? Weren't it one of our best friends? Wasn't it the one that actually opened up the routes to Saipan? Why do no other airlines want to fly to Saipan? Where does the real truth lie in this problem?

I find it hard to believe that all routes to and out of Saipan are money losers. Does this mean that other destinations are money makers and we are not? Is there anything we can do to solve that problem? What will happen should Asiana Airlines decide to fly away? According to newspaper reports it too is losing money. What are we doing to make sure they don't desert us also after a few months?

Industry No. 4: Why have all the previously owned Japanese hotels been sold out? They haven't sold their hotels in other tourist places such as Guam or Hawaii. But I guess if we don't have the Japanese tourist and don't have the airlines to bring them in, then the Japanese investors don't need the empty hotels. So on and on goes the story. This is another classic lesson on how to unsucceed in business.

Industry No. 5: The lone casino on Tinian has been limping along for 10 years. I am surprised they haven't thrown in the towel and left. We promised them an improved airport 10 years ago with fueling facilities. What happened that they haven't been constructed?

I never hear of the government working out problems with them that occur. Instead we charge their customers a fee to go to Tinian to play at the casino. Have we forgotten that the Tinian Dynasty has had to buy its own means of transportation such as planes and ferry boats to shuttle their customers back and forth at its own expense. We should have done that with them. Is any one in the government sincerely sitting down with them and work as a partner. Aren't we scared that if they leave, look at all the money we will lose?

Industry No. 6: I will not delve about the CUC fiasco. It has been battered around enough. We daily feel its failure and unfortunately will continue to feel it for a whole longer. But we will discuss this at a later time.

Industry No. 7: The labor situation is another classic one. For over 25 years we seem to never have grasped how to handle this slippery one. We have changed the regulations so often it makes one's head spin. We have vacillated from position to position over the years, that we don't know which end is the head and which is the tail. I have given up on this matter and float with whatever the powers that be dictate.

No, I am not writing all this just to poke fun or ridicule anybody. It is a serious matter. We have had many great opportunities to improve our economy and our lives, but for some strange reason we mess them all up. True, some outside forces always affect us but if we work hard and are sincere we can overcome or adjust to them. Next week let's look at what we could have done to soften the blows. ***(To be continued)***

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼78°	▲86° ▼78°	▲86° ▼78°	▲86° ▼78°	▲86° ▼78°

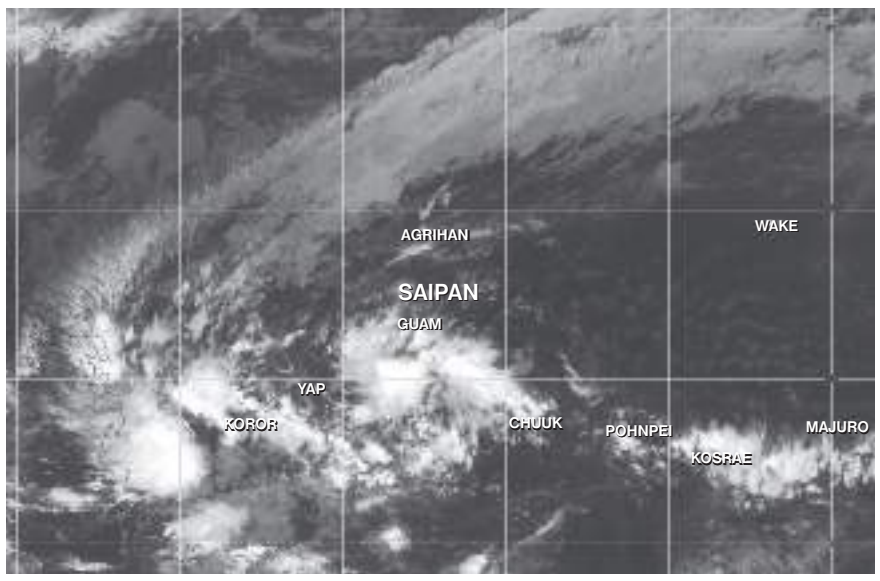
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Cloudy	▲84	▼75
Palau	Showers	▲85	▼77
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼77
Chuuk	Rain	▲89	▼76
Pohnpei	Windy	▲84	▼76
Kosrae	Showers	▲85	▼79
Majuro	Sunny	▲85	▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲70	▼60
Beijing	Cloudy	▲32	▼21
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲72	▼61
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲79	▼68
London	Showers	▲39	▼32
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲74	▼50
Manila	Cloudy	▲80	▼73
Melbourne	Sunny	▲92	▼74
Miami	Partly Sunny	▲72	▼55
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲31	▼22
Osaka	Showers	▲47	▼37
Paris	Rain	▲45	▼31
Pusan	Sunny	▲47	▼28
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲52	▼47
Salem	Mostly Sunny	▲50	▼33
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲63	▼46
Seoul	Sunny	▲35	▼17
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲53	▼34
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲33	▼25

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, SUNDAY, JAN. 18, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line extends southwestward from a weak low pressure system centered northeast of Wake Island at 24N170E through Agrihan at 18N146E to beyond 130E at 15N. Extensive cloudiness and widespread rain are found along and up to 450 miles northwest of the shear line. A near-equatorial trough extends southeastward from a low-level circulation centered southwest of Koror at 5N128E to end at EQ147E aided by upper-level divergence. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring along the trough axis over Koror south of a line from 8N130E to 8N136E to 2N142E. Similar conditions are also found north of the axis between 10N and 13N from 130E to 134E. Trade-wind convergence is combining with favorable upper-level dynamics to produce numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms just south of Guam and west of Chuuk within 280 miles of a line from 7N142E to 10N150E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are seen further east over a large area from north of Chuuk and southeastward across Pohnpei, Kosrae and Mili Atoll to the dateline. This area is within 100 miles of a line from 10N150E to 9N155E to 5N160E to 4N169E to 6N180.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
3:06 AM Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
7:30 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
1:27 PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
9:22 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47 AM	6:08 PM
Tuesday	6:47 AM	6:09 PM
Wednesday	6:47 AM	6:09 PM
Thursday	6:47 AM	6:10 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:11 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	12:46 AM	12:24 PM
Tuesday	1:38 AM	1:07 PM
Wednesday	2:30 AM	1:53 PM
Thursday	3:23 AM	2:42 PM
Friday	4:14 AM	3:33 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 1, 2009

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	2,3,4,5,6
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 099	5:00am	7:35am	Daily
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily
Guam-Narita			
NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm	Daily
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am	1,4,6
NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
Guam-Osaka			
NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:20am	11:05am	Daily
Guam-Nagoya			
NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Incheon			
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am	1,4,6 via Osaka
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm	Daily
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am	1,4,5,7
Saipan-Shanghai			
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am	2,6
Rota-Guam			
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7
Guam-Palau			
CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm	1,7
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm	3,5
Palau-Manila			
CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm	3,5
Guam-Manila			
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am	1,2,4,6,7
Nagoya-Manila			
NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm	Daily
Incheon-Hongkong			
OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm	Daily
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm	Daily
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm	5,7
Narita-Manila			
NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm	Daily

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,2,3,4,7
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:20am+1	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 100	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily
Narita-Guam			
NW 74	9:45am	2:20pm	Daily
NW 82	10:30am	3:10pm	Daily
Osaka-Saipan			
OZ 120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7
NW 084	10:40am	3:05pm	Daily
Osaka-Guam			
NW 80	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	9:00pm	1:20am+1	Daily
Nagoya-Guam			
NW 24	10:00am	2:30pm	Daily
Incheon-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7 via Osaka
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3,4,6,7
Shanghai-Saipan			
FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6
Palau-Guam			
CO 954	2:30am	5:25am	1,2
CO 892	2:35am	5:30am	4,6
Manila-Palau			
CO 892	10:10pm	1:50am+1	3,5
Manila-Guam			
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Manila-Nagoya			
NW 72	6:30am	11:05am	Daily
Hongkong-Incheon			
OZ 724	12:30am	4:50am	Daily
OZ 7183	12:45am	5:05am	1,4,6
OZ 722	1:30pm	5:45pm	Daily
Manila-Narita			
NW 2	7:45am	12:40pm	Daily

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Letters to the Editor

Si yu'us ma'ase

I want to express my extreme gratitude to the Friends of the Monument who had done a fantastic job and for all their support in making the idea of a Marine Monument possible here in the CNMI. I also would love to say thank you to our leaders for working cooperatively with the federal government in making this wonderful decision. And lastly I want to thank President Bush for this brilliant opportunity to have a Marine Monument.

For the past months there has been much confusion, questions, and arguments about the issue and I'm glad that our local leaders and the federal government are on the same page and can work together to make the best for our economy. I was shocked and at the same time happy to find out that our local leaders support the idea of a monument. I was even happier to hear that President Bush declared the monument. Without all the hard work, community, support, and arguments, this would have never happen.

As we step into a new year we must look into new ways to make the best for our economy. We must work together to make Saipan an enjoyable place to live in and most especially to make a great place for tourist all over the world to visit. Thanks once again to all who took part in this idea.

Emlaine Fejeran
Via email

Breakthrough in Kagman

Kagman Komunidat Association is pleased to announce that it met with CIP coordinator Vicky Villagomez, CUC Engineers, Public Health representatives, Rep. Rosemond Santos, Rep. Ed Salas, and Taotao Tano's Greg Cruz at the public meeting.

The public meeting was to be held at the Kagman Community Center but had to be relocated to Chacha School due to the center's power disconnection. It was acknowledged that around $1.8 million will be used for pavement of roads in Kagman 3 and 4, which is tentatively scheduled to start this year. Sidewalk construction will also begin this month in front of Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

There will be a hearing in the future to discuss the different options that can be pursued regarding the wastewater project for Kagman village. A private health clinic announced at the meeting that it will be opening in Kagman soon to serve Kagman and its neighboring villages. Puengin Inetnon (Chamorro for night of gathering) will be held every government Friday payday beginning Jan. 30 at the Kagman Community Center's parking lot. Puengin Inetnon will be Kagman's Friday Night Market and will feature food, drinks, crafts, merchandise, and other items for sale. Interested vendors can contact the Kagman Postal Services at 256-POST for applications.

Jesse D. Torres
KKA president

Mr. V retires from PSS

Retirement at PSS is a euphemism for someone strongly considering that one resigns one's position. Or, the act of resigning at PSS is indicative of one's acumen relative to an impending request that one should seriously consider retiring.

One of my co-teachers badgered me the last two years to retire. Four of my classroom students, out of 22, openly applaud the prospect that I will retire/resign soon. C-6 and C-5 in the cervical bones have an outgrowth that is irritating nerve endings causing tingling and cramping to the right side of the upper extremities, and may also be affecting the left side of the brain.

Thus, it came to pass that on MLK, Jr. Day, when one celebrates the new practice of "speaking truth to power," and on the eve of the Great Citizens' Swearing-In of America with Barack Obama as President and everyone else as associate executive officers to the Orator-in-chief at the Oval office, Mr. V the SVES sixth grade teacher, erstwhile TOY in 2005 for SVES, the VFW Pacific, and the NMICH, wrote letters to the Governor, the members of the Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education, the SVES Principal and teachers, the ACT President and members, the PTA and SCBM Chair and members, and the parents of his sixth grade students, announcing his resignation/retirement from the Public School System.

This letter writing is not of the intensity of the MLK, Jr. *Letter from Birmingham* to his fellow clergy who accused him of employing extremist tactics, nor of the profoundly meditative musings of the young German Theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer from prison after being accused of participating in an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Hitler. (Tom Cruise plays a German officer who failed to assassinate Hitler in the movie "Valkyrie" recently shown on island, the result of which included the hanging of Bonhoeffer three weeks before the Soviets captured Berlin.)

Raising both men's memory is not an attempt at comparison, nor make a sly osmotic derivation of their reputation, but to highlight the function of letter writing as a form of protest in the Protestant sense, i.e., as the transitive verb *protestare* to mean "to declare, or to assert." Thus, my retirement/resignation from Elementary School teaching is not just a walking away from current role and function, but to make a declarative and assertive statement to aspects of our educational system that needs attending to.

The letter to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial is to remind his office of his function to appoint a teacher's representative to the Board of Education, cc: Dan Nielson who is to advice the Governor on educational matters. I would not object even if he appoints our eminent colleague AB who allegedly thinks he is the most qualified (and the only one at that!) to fill the position. Of course, the ACT President has been properly endorsed by the group, but at this point, dithering on this appointment damages teachers' morale more than any legal service it may serve the clarifying (an oxymoron?) legal minds.

The address to the members of the Board of Education is an outright accusation of their seeming callousness over teachers' wellbeing through policy decisions that allows for no elbow room to consider individual circumstances. (As is common knowledge, any attempt to impose a 'one-size-fits-all' solution to HR situations is bound to fail.) The two-year contract cycle might have been helpful in attracting temperate zone teachers to come and defrost their icy *dagans* in our lukewarm waters, but it does not deal with issues of tenure, and it leaves inordinate power to administrators over the professional careers of teachers. It is time to resuscitate the tenure issue within the system

I have personally felt the consequences of HR reneging on a promise of retroactive application (plus a record of heartless application), and before I finalize a Chapter 7 option, I would not mind BoE revisiting my case to make good on their promise, and save me from the ignominy of bankruptcy!

Previously, when I brought something to the attention of the David Borja while still the Commissioner, he responded that he felt his hands were tied by policy decisions made elsewhere. I commented then that taking BoE/PSS to judicial adjudication is like taking one's Grandma to court! Our affable current Commissioner has enough political savvy to decide that her office can no longer just be captive of grant compliance and accreditation fiction writing, nor does curriculum designs be just empty echoes of current trends and fads generated elsewhere. It is time to focus on the state of personnel. The above cited two-year cycle of contracts do not serve those who are covenanted to be more than recipients of a bi-weekly pay check. Teachers are the system's most important asset, and to say that they are underutilized is to make a great understatement. As a wit once uttered: "what passes for professional development is nothing but servicing mercenary, abused and exploited employment."

To my Principal, two teachers in our school are publicized examples of Sam Joyner's HET - highly effective teachers; but they are NHQT - not highly qualified teachers - by centrum's standards because they have yet to pass their PRAXIS. New non-PRAXIS passers are paid substitute teachers' pay rate although they are saddled with full-time classroom responsibilities; a teacher's aide who has functioned as a certified full-fledged teacher in the past but lacks the academic credentials (has an Associate rather than a Bachelor's degree), is used as a substitute teacher although she has functioned and fully demonstrated her competence as a full-time homeroom teacher. To add insult to injury, she clocks in on the teacher's aide time design, but is expected to perform two roles, while receiving petty cash level of remuneration. It is time to refocus administrative efforts away from time-consuming facilities and equipment maintenance, and punitive behavior modification, to authentic curriculum supervision and care-filled personnel care. We might just be surprised to witness the blooming of creativity and effectivity from human beings treated as such rather than as mere peon of economic blackmails and squeeze plays.

The ACT President took over a reviving association that fell into disarray over internal bickerings. Elected while still a teacher, she has since assumed an administration position and that has added to the divisiveness within the ranks. Her executive term of office terminates this year and I trust that she would focus her remaining efforts to gathering a lot of us into active dialogue and constructive conversations. Although teachers are an invaluable asset, when inert, they are just as effective as fungus-infected bread in the cupboard!

To parents and students, the paradigm for teaching as exercises in rote memory, and the model of coercive military discipline as instrument of order and behavioral modification no longer works. It is time for parents to return to the education arena and struggle with their children's hyper active behavior in a hyper active world; it is time for students to be strengthened to grow-up against the towering confidence of pedagogical giants rather than cute terrorists to the cowed jellyfish spines of coddling teachers worried about being liked.

My father when he retired, said: " I am *retiring;* I am getting a new set of tires!" He was in his 60s then; he died last year at 94. Those new set of tires went a long way! I say the same with resigning; why not make it a *re-signing* occasion. Resigning in common connotation is giving up, which is the least of my intention.

We do want to underscore the message of this day and that of tomorrow: the days of representative democracy where someone on our behalf decides for us, is over; the movement of citizens' commitment has begun. My school's mascot is the canary, the world's favored bird in a cage. My resignation is an act of liberation, bringing my pedagogical skills, for whatever it is forth, out into the open air.

Jaime Vergara
Via e-mail

Re: Seman's misperception

I see that you have become a self-anointed legal eagle looking at the intricate legal issues from a layman's perspective.

Definitely, I don't expect justices in the superior, supreme and federal courts to know what are the basic fundamental policies of DPL. It is for this reason that we have attorneys to present these issues for judicial review.

Having said that, I am hopeful that justices would make their decisions within the confines of the mandates of the NMI Constitution and statutes in the books. In brief, they should stay legal and constitutional and not venture into violating authorities reserved for the House of Representatives or disposition of segregated DPL funds.

Don't you think I also wish to see all land claims issues resolved forthwith? But the use of DPL's segregated funds isn't the right way to resolve these issues. It is the obligation of the NMI government, not its agencies and instrumentalities.

Regarding my vocabulary, it demonstrates that you must improve upon your reading comprehension and writing exercises for I have no plans to write in Special English to make-up for your inadequacies, sir! Have a nice day.

John S. DelRosario, Jr.
Secretary, Department of Public Lands

Business

Economic stimulus bill to fuel Obama's priorities

WASHINGTON (AP)—The economic crisis that will dominate Barack Obama's first 100 days as president, and beyond, will give him a rare chance to enact big portions of his agenda that otherwise might have languished for months or years.

Not since Franklin D. Roosevelt has a new president been poised to pack so many ambitious, costly—and, under more normal circumstances, highly contentious—projects into one fast-moving bill. As in 1933, a frightening economic collapse makes the quick political work possible, choking off longer debates and possible opposition that many of the initiatives would have faced in better times.

Obama

Congress is working on a mammoth stimulus bill, costing $825 billion or more, to treat the sick economy. Obama is using it as a vehicle for an array of priorities, including billions of dollars for renewable energy, education and health care innovations.

The economic crisis that drives this train, of course, also poses severe challenges to the new president. His lofty approval ratings could collapse if the number of jobs and home values keep falling. And with the intense focus on stimulating the economy, he will postpone priorities that do not fit into the legislative package.

Obama already has said he will delay his campaign promise to raise taxes on the wealthy. He also has signaled there will be no prompt action on sticky issues such as revisiting the North America Free Trade Agreement, changing the "don"t ask, don't tell" policy for gays in the military, and making it easier for workers to unionize.

Aside from the economy, Obama's biggest task will be to wind down the Iraq war and make Afghanistan more stable.

But those tasks will take a couple of years or more. Obama, meanwhile, can have an immediate and symbolically potent impact on several fronts by issuing executive orders to reverse or change policies of President George W. Bush.

Circuit City to close 567 remaining US stores

AP

In this Nov. 28, 2008 file photo, a woman looks at television sets at a Circuit City store in San Francisco.

By MICHAEL FELBERBAUM and VINNEE TONG
AP BUSINESS WRITERS

Circuit City became the largest retailer to fall victim to the expanding financial crisis Friday, announcing it will shut down its remaining 567 U.S. stores at the cost of 34,000 more jobs after failing to sell the business.

The closure of the nation's second-biggest consumer electronics retailer spells more trouble for the nations malls, and is the latest casualty of an unprecedented pullback in consumer spending that has claimed KB Toys, Mervyns LLC and Linens 'N Things.

"Very, very sad," said Alan L. Wurtzel, son of company founder Samuel S. Wurtzel and himself a former chief executive of Circuit City. "I feel particularly badly for the people who are employed or until recently were employed."

Richmond, Va.-based Circuit City had been seeking a buyer or a deal to refinance its debt, but the hobbled credit market and consumer worries proved insurmountable. Negotiations for an acquisition extended past midnight Thursday before finally falling through, Circuit City lawyer Gregg Galardi said.

Two potential buyers—Mexican billionaire Ricardo Salinas Pliego, who controls a chain of electronics stores in Latin America, and the Golden Gate Capital private equity firm—considered a shrunken form of the business, retaining as many 350 stores or as few as 180. But Circuit City couldn't secure the necessary financing or support from vendors.

Report: Russia and Ukraine reach gas deal

MOSCOW (AP)—Russian and Ukrainian leaders talked into the night Saturday in search of a deal to restore gas supplies to a freezing Europe.

An earlier meeting that also included officials from the 27-nation European Union ended without a resolution to a dispute between Moscow and Kiev that has drastically reduced supplies of Russian gas to Europe for nearly two weeks.

After hosting EU energy chiefs, government officials from gas-starved Balkan nations and Kremlin-friendly ex-Soviet republics, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev expressed confidence in a swift settlement.

"I'm certain that we will resolve the transit problem in the nearest future," he told a news conference.

But EU officials left without any assurance of a restoration of shipments of Russian gas via Ukraine, normally the route for about one-fifth of the gas Europe uses. Nations in eastern Europe that rely on Russia have been left with virtually no new supplies.

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and his Ukrainian counterpart Yulia Tymoshenko, who had met briefly before joining the broader conference in the Kremlin, resumed their talks afterward in the government headquarters a few miles (kilometers) upriver.

The EU has threatened to review its relations with both countres if their dispute is not resolved this weekend.

"What matters are results, and the results as of this evening were not satisfactory, because there was not an agreement," EU spokesman Ferran Tarradellas said. "We need an agreement."

He said the EU delegation was "encouraged by the discussions" because Russia and Ukraine were seeking solutions rather than just blaming each other.

The Kremlin had billed the meeting as a summit, but no EU head of state attended. The EU was represented by its Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs and Czech Energy Minister Martin Riman, whose country holds the rotating EU presidency.

FDA urges people to avoid peanut butter products

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal health authorities on Saturday urged consumers to avoid eating cookies, cakes, ice cream and other foods that contain peanut butter until authorities can learn more about a deadly outbreak of salmonella contamination.

Most peanut butter sold in jars at supermarkets appears to be safe, said Stephen Sundlof, head of the Food and Drug Administration's food safety center.

"As of now, there is no indication that the major national name-brand jars of peanut butter sold in retails stores are linked to the recall," Sundlof told reporters in a conference call.

Officials are focusing on peanut paste, as well as peanut butter, produced at a Blakely, Ga., facility owned by Peanut Corp. of America. Its peanut butter is not sold directly to consumers but distributed to institutions and food companies. But the peanut paste, made from roasted peanuts, is an ingredient in cookies, cakes and other products that people buy in the supermarket.

AP

In this undated photo provided by the Minnesota Department of Health, a container of King Nut peanut butter is seen.

"This is an excellent illustration of an ingredient-driven outbreak," said Dr. Robert Tauxe, who oversees foodborne illness investigations for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

So far, more than 470 people have gotten sick in 43 states, and at least 90 had to be hospitalized. At least six deaths are being blamed on the outbreak. Salmonella is a bacteria and the most common source of food poisoning in the U.S., causing diarrhea, cramping and fever.

Officials said new illnesses are still being reported in the outbreak investigation.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Police probe Fla. fraud claim, missing fund leader

MIAMI (AP)—A Florida hedge fund manager accused of defrauding investors out of millions is missing and his family is worried because he left a note indicating he was "distraught," police said Saturday. Authorities were interviewing investors and looking into claims that Arthur G. Nadel stole from them, said Sarasota Police Capt. Bill Spitler. It was too soon to say exactly how much was invested, but there were reports the hedge fund could be out $350 million. "The victims that I know of, I know some of them personally, they have no reason to lie," Spitler said. Nadel, who operated under the name Scoop Management Inc. in Sarasota, was last seen Wednesday morning by his wife. She reported him missing later that day. Nadel, 75, left a note for his family, although authorities nor his wife would divulge its contents. "The reason we were called was because he was distraught and they became concerned," said Sarasota County Sheriff's Office spokesman Lt. Chuck Lesaltato. Peg Nadel said she was cooperating with the authorities and all the investors, but wouldn't go into any detail.

Thousands crowd Detroit auto show's public opening

DETROIT (AP)—Lee Pierce doesn't have anything against the eco-friendly hybrids and electric vehicles on display at the North American International Auto Show. But low emissions and high mileage aren't why he drove the roughly 500 miles from his Knoxville, Tenn., home to Detroit. "This was worth the trip right here. It's drop-dead gorgeous," Pierce, 38, said while admiring a sleek silver open-top limited-production Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren Stirling Moss. "I'm interested in the whole green thing, but that kind of takes a back burner in comparison to something like this." Pierce was one of thousands who braved frigid temperatures and snow to crowd into Cobo Center in downtown Detroit Saturday for the public opening of the 2009 auto show. The doors opened after almost a week of special access for the media, industry insiders and others.

Regulators close 2 banks in Illinois, Wash. state

WASHINGTON (AP)—Regulators on Friday shut down two small banks, National Bank of Commerce in Illinois and Bank of Clark County in Washington state. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. was appointed receiver of the banks. They were the first two federally insured banks to fail and be shuttered by regulators this year amid the pressures of tumbling home prices, rising mortgage foreclosures and tighter credit. National Bank of Commerce, in Berkeley, Ill., had $430.9 million in assets and $402.1 million in deposits as of Jan. 7. Bank of Clark County, in Vancouver, Wash., had $446.5 million in assets and $366.5 million in deposits as of Jan. 13. The FDIC said all of National Bank's deposits will be assumed by Republic Bank of Chicago, based in Oak Brook, Ill. Its two branches will reopen Saturday as offices of Republic Bank. That bank also will buy about $366.6 million of National Bank of Commerce's assets; the FDIC will retain the rest for eventual sale.

Nation

Obama rides the rails to DC for inaugural kickoff

WASHINGTON (AP)—Invoking hope and history, President-elect Barack Obama rolled into the capital city Saturday night pledging to help bring the nation "a new Declaration of Independence" and promising to rise to the stern challenges of the times. He kicked off a four-day inaugural celebration with a daylong rail trip, retracing the path Abraham Lincoln took in 1861.

Obama began his day in Philadelphia, where he said the young nation had faced its "first true test" as a fragile democracy. He ended it in Washington, where his own tests await after his inauguration on Tuesday.

The president-in-waiting drew on a grand heritage of American giants as he appealed "not to our easy instincts but to our better angels," an echo of Lincoln's first inaugural address. He took note of the enormous challenges that lie ahead and promised to act with "fierce urgency," a phrase often used by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Riding a vintage railcar on his whistle-stop trip to Washington, Obama carried with him the hopes of a nation weary of war, frightened of economic chaos and searching for better days. Vice President-elect Joe Biden joined the journey en route, from his home in Delaware, and spoke for many when he said he was excited and ready for Tuesday.

Then, sobered by the challenges of governing, Biden added: "I think it's Wednesday we need to be ready."

Obama was smiling and confident throughout the day and across the miles, reaching at each stop for history's lessons. In Philadelphia, he noted the risks taken by the men who declared America independent from Britain. In Wilmington, he applauded the state that first ratified the Constitution. And in Baltimore, he hailed the troops at Fort McHenry who beat back the British navy and inspired the poem that became "The Star-Spangled Banner."

AP

Vice President-elect Joe Biden, left, his wife Jill, President-elect Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle, pose for photographs in Wilmington, Del., Saturday, Jan. 17, 2009, on their inaugural whistle stop train trip to Washington.

Washington pulsed with anticipation of Obama's swearing in as the nation's first black president. The city was aflutter with preparations for four days of parties and pomp, shadowed at every turn by layer upon layer of security. For every banner or piece of bunting that was going up around the city, there was a concrete barrier or metal fence at the ready as well.

Revelers eager to get a head start on the celebration already were flowing into the city.

Toni Mateo, 38, arrived on a packed train from Atlanta. It was a quiet ride at first, he said.

"I just screamed out `Obama,' and the whole crowd erupted," he said.

For all the travelers arriving in Washington, there were plenty headed the opposite direction—fleeing the crowds, the security, and the winter cold.

For traveler Obama, there was a celebratory air as his train pulled out of the station at Philadelphia.

"Welcome aboard the 2009 inaugural train to D.C," the conductor intoned.

MLK's dream also included economic justice

NEW YORK (AP)—The focus of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 wasn't what had been accomplished—but rather his view of what still needed to be done.

More than four decades later, King scholars say he would take the same approach at this historic moment—the inauguration of the first black president at a time when the nation is facing its greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression.

The crisis could widen the already large financial gaps between whites and blacks and make it more difficult to attain King's dream of economic equality in America.

"I believe that Dr. King would caution us not to rest on the election of a black president and say our work here is done," said Kendra King, associate professor of politics at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta.

Although King is best known for his civil rights work, he was a staunch advocate for economic justice. In the months before he was killed, he had been working on the Poor People's Campaign and calling for an economic bill of rights. When he was assassinated in 1968, he was in Memphis supporting a sanitation workers' strike.

"Economic empowerment and justice was always a part of Dr. King's purpose," professor King said. "Civil rights without economic parity is still imprisonment."

While the election of Barack Obama is a huge step toward King's dream of a time when people are judged on the content of their character and not their skin color, economic data shows racial disparities are still pervasive when it comes to financial equality.

From unemployment rates to wages to household income to home ownership rates, the differences are stark. For example, while white unemployment was at 6.6 percent in December, black unemployment was 11.9 percent. For black men, it was even higher, at 13.4 percent.

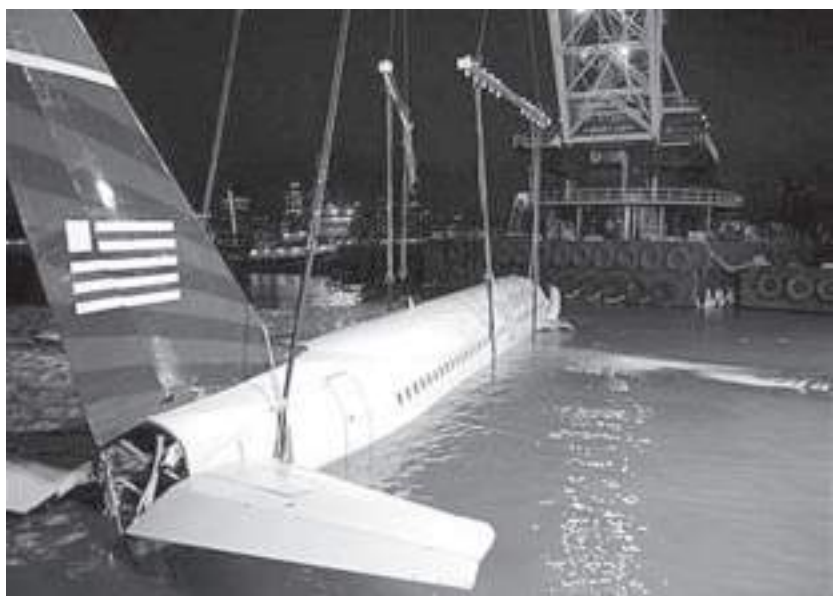
NTSB: Pilot landed in Hudson to avoid catastrophe

By LARRY NEUMEISTER and DAVID B. CARUSO
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITERS

NEW YORK (AP)—The pilot of a crippled US Airways jetliner made a split-second decision to put down in the Hudson River because trying to return to the airport after birds knocked out both engines could have led to a "catastrophic" crash in a populated neighborhood, he told investigators Saturday.

Capt. Chesley B. "Sully" Sullenberger said that in the few minutes he had to decide where to set down the powerless plane Thursday afternoon, he felt it was "too low, too slow" and near too many buildings to go anywhere else, according to the National Transportation Safety Board account of his testimony.

The pilot and his first officer provided their first account to NTSB investigators Saturday of what unfolded inside the cockpit of US Airways Flight 1549 after it slammed into a flock of birds and lost both engines.



AP

A heavy lift crane removes US Airways flight 1549 from its makeshift mooring along a seawall in lower Manhattan, Saturday, Jan. 17, 2009 in New York.

Co-pilot Jeff Skiles, who was flying the plane at takeoff, saw the birds coming in perfect formation, and made note of it. Sullenberger looked up, and in an instant his windscreen was filled with big, dark-brown birds.

Cold grips Northeast; South, Midwest get relief

BOSTON (AP)—Bitter cold kept its grip on the Northeast on Saturday, while warmer temperatures brought relief to the Midwest and Southeast.

A day after schools in a dozen states closed and Alabama was colder than Alaska, temperatures in the South climbed into the 40s, thawing water fountains and pipes. Parts of the Northeast, however, persisted with temperatures barely in the teens.

In Boston, the Pine Street Inn shelter sent vans to look for the homeless during the day, rather than just at night, said shelter spokeswoman Barbara Trevisan. The shelter also expanded its hours and is serving an extra meal.

"From what I'm hearing, it's the coldest it's been in a number of years," she said.

Trevisan said the shelter, which holds about 700 people, has been packed in recent nights. Boston's low early Saturday was eight degrees, and temperatures hovered near zero elsewhere in the state.

The weather led to at least seven deaths. In northeast Ohio, authorities said an 8-year-old boy drowned Friday after he fell into a partially frozen creek and got stuck under the ice. Temperatures had reached several degrees below zero in the town of Mentor, Ohio.

Near Pittsburgh, the frozen body of a man was found outside his home at midday Friday. The cause of death was not immediately determined.

ACROSS THE NATION

Beekeepers fear sting of imported Australian hives

ATWATER, Calif. (AP)—Beekeepers who are battling a mysterious ailment that led to the disappearance of millions of honeybees now fear the sting of imported Australian bees that they worry could outcompete their hives and might carry a deadly parasite unseen in the United States. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has allowed shipments of Australian bees to resume despite concerns by some of its own scientists. Australia had been airfreighting the insects across the Pacific for four years to replace hives devastated by the perplexing colony collapse disorder. But six weeks ago the Australian government abruptly stopped the shipments, saying it could no longer be certain the country was free of a smaller, aggressive bee that has infested areas near the Great Barrier Reef, U.S. officials said. Early this month, the USDA decided to permit the bee shipments to resume with some precautions, and the first planeloads arrived in San Francisco last Monday.

Debris kills boy in stands at monster truck show

TACOMA, Wash. (AP)—Debris flew into the grandstands at a monster truck show in Washington state, killing a 6-year-old boy and injuring another spectator, witnesses and city officials said Saturday. A red truck came apart while doing doughnuts during the freestyle competition of Friday night's Monster Jam show, the witnesses said. Debris from the truck flew 30 to 50 feet over a safety barrier into the stands. "Parts were falling off and a piece flew up and hit a little boy," Christine Moe told King Television of Seattle. Police Officer Mark Fulghum said officers serving as security at the Tacoma Dome investigated the accident. "At this point, there's nothing to indicate that there's anything criminal," Fulghum told The Associated Press on Saturday night. "Right now it looks like a tragic accident." The Pierce County medical examiner's office identified the boy killed as Sebastin Hizey of Puyallup. The boy's father, Jessie Hizey, issued a statement to KIRO-TV on Saturday that said his son was hit in the head by a Frisbee-sized piece of metal, weighing between 7 and 12 pounds. "I cannot get the images" out of my head, the father said.

Asia

Global slump casts a pall over Chinese New Year

BEIJING (AP)—Painter Wei Haibin is carefully weighing every purchase as he heads home to Hebei province for China's biggest family holiday—a time when the economy typically enjoys a bounce.

"The total that I spend buying things for the Lunar New Year will be about half of what I spent last year," he said. "Though I will probably spend the same amount buying gifts for family and friends in my hometown because it's a matter of face, I will be really tight on the things I buy for myself."

Wei's income from his landscape paintings, which are sold in Europe, fell 80 percent last year, and the Year of the Ox seems likely to bring more belt-tightening. Squeezed by the global slowdown, consumers and companies in countries that celebrate the Lunar New Year, which begins this year on Jan. 26, are slashing their spending on traditionally lavish gifts, liquor and banquets.

In China, where many businesses count on the equivalent of a Christmas shopping boom for a big share of annual sales, the blow will hurt. It could further depress China's falling growth rate just as Beijing is rolling out a multibillion-dollar plan to boost consumer spending.

"We would estimate spending would be off 20 to 30 percent this year, which is rather critical for quite a large number of retailers and certainly restaurants," said Sam Mulligan, director of market research firm Data-Driven Marketing Asia, which surveyed 4,500 consumers in five major cities in December. "All of these areas are going to be hit hard."

Mulligan said 35 percent of all Chinese entertainment spending and 40 percent of sales of premium beer and liquor takes place over the weeklong Lunar New Year holiday.

At the International Exhibition Hotel in Dongguan, a manufacturing city in China's south that has been battered by the drop in exports, companies that splurged on lobster for employee parties in 2008 are ordering pork this year. A hotel saleswoman said bookings of banquet rooms are still above 90 percent, but companies are spending about half as much per table this year, about 2,000 yuan ($290).

Companies also are scaling down employee lotteries—a common feature of holiday parties.

"Prizes used to be cash—thousands of yuan (hundreds of dollars) for the top prize—or MP3 players, mobile phones or computers," said Nancy Zheng, a saleswoman for the Sofitel Royal Lagoon Hotel in Dongguan. "This year, most prizes are blankets, quilts and microwave ovens."

Independent economists expect China's growth rate to fall this year as low as 5 percent, down from an estimated 9 percent last year and 13 percent in 2007.

AP

Shoppers walk past the Chinese New Year decorations at a shopping mall in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Saturday, Jan. 17, 2009.

Hundreds may have perished in Andaman Sea

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—Thailand will investigate reports that the Thai navy abandoned migrants on a barge in the ocean where hundreds of them may have drowned, the government said Saturday.

The Thai Foreign Ministry also said it will reassess the overall situation of illegal immigration in light of the incident and would attempt to work with neighboring countries to better address the problem.

"Thai officials are currently investigating and verifying all the facts and surrounding circumstances," the ministry said in a statement, referring to the late December incident where more than 100 Myanmarese and Bangladeshi workers were rescued by Indian authorities from a barge adrift near the Andaman Islands.

"In accordance with our immigration laws, we are committed to maintaining our traditional adherence to humanitarian principles and the protection of human rights," the ministry said.

It is the first reported incident of the Thai navy forcing a boat out to sea rather than detaining the migrants as was policy in the past.

The United Nations refugee agency demanded an explanation from Thailand Friday for the incident, which has been denied by Thai navy and immigration officials for weeks.

The migrants—Myanmarese refugees in Bangladesh known as Rohingyas and Bangladeshi nationals—were attempting to land their boats in Thailand and proceed by land to neighboring Malaysia where they planned to get work.

Indian authorities say 300 workers are still missing and presumed dead based on interviews with survivors.

Washington-based Refugees International and Bangkok-based advocacy group Arakan Project say that several other boats containing as many as 1,000 migrants have been intercepted since December by the Thai navy and forced back out to sea.

A boat containing 193 people reportedly ended up on Sabang island off the Indonesian province of Aceh where they are being held on a naval base, according to reports earlier this week in The Jakarta Post and the New Delhi-based Mizzima newspaper. It was impossible to independently verify the account.

2 US troops killed in separate Afghanistan attacks

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A suicide car bomb attack Saturday on a heavily guarded road between a U.S. military base and the German Embassy in the Afghan capital killed one U.S. service member and four Afghan civilians, officials said.

Separately, a U.S. service member died when militants fired at a CH-47 transport helicopter and it made a "hard landing" in eastern Kunar province, the U.S. military said. Military spokesman Col. Greg Julian said it wasn't immediately clear whether the incoming fire brought down the helicopter.

The attacks come at a time of increasing attention on Afghanistan as President-elect Barack Obama is set to take office. Obama has promised to increase America's focus on the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan while decreasing troop levels in Iraq.

The U.S. has said it will send up to 30,000 new troops into Afghanistan in 2009, including some 3,000 forces in two provinces adjacent to Kabul, where militants now have free reign. The U.S. now has some 32,000 troops in Afghanistan.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the bomb attack in Kabul and said German military personnel were the targets. A spokesman for the German Foreign Ministry in Berlin said "some personnel" were wounded in the blast, but he did not give numbers. He said they had no reports of deaths.

U.S. military spokesman Col. Jerry O'Hara said one U.S. service member died from wounds received in the 9:45 a.m. attack on a busy Kabul street. The blast also wounded six American troops and a U.S. civilian, he said.

Researcher: North Korea has `weaponized' plutonium

BEIJING (AP)—North Korea has hardened its stance on disarmament, saying it has "weaponized" plutonium into warheads, but hopes for better ties with President-elect Barack Obama, a U.S. researcher who visited the North said Saturday.

Officials say the weapons cannot be inspected and Pyongyang might keep them even if it normalizes relations with Washington, said Selig Harrison, director of the Washington-based Center for International Policy's Asia program.

Harrison, who has visited the North 11 times since 1972, said he met this week with the North's nuclear envoy, Ri Gun, and other officials.

The officials said "North Korea is now a nuclear weapons state and will not commit itself now on when it will give it up as a result of denuclearization negotiations," Harrison told reporters in Beijing. "We are not in a position to say when we will abandon nuclear weapons," he quoted Ri as saying.

Harrison said the North's "much, much harder line" might be due to the rise of military hard-liners after leader Kim Jong Il suffered a stroke. North Korea has denied reports that Kim had been seriously ill, but Harrison said that based on information from his own sources in Pyongyang he believed Kim suffered a stroke.

"He has recovered and he is now making what is described to me as 'key decisions' but is not dealing on a day-to-day basis with detailed issues as he had done before," Harrison said.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Kidnapped Red Cross staff in Philippines are alive

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Red Cross said Saturday that three workers kidnapped on a restive southern Philippine island have called colleagues and said they were unharmed. Anna Nelson, a spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross in the Philippines, said the three made the call Friday, a day after they were abducted by motorcycle-riding gunmen on southern Jolo island. Nelson said there was no further information on their whereabouts, and she declined to give other details regarding their phone call. Sen. Richard Gordon, chairman of the Philippine National Red Cross, said they had "proof of life, but no demands, so far." Despite the abduction and security concerns, Jean-Daniel Tauxe, head of the international Red Cross delegation in Manila, said the aid agency would still operate elsewhere in southern Mindanao and continue to help more than 300,000 people displaced by fighting between government troops and Muslim separatist rebels.

Girl in China critically ill with bird flu

BEIJING (AP)—A 2-year-old girl in northern China has tested positive for bird flu and is in critical condition—the second case of human infection in a month. The girl fell ill on Jan. 7 in central Hunan province and was taken to a hospital by her grandparents four days later after she returned home to Shanxi province, the Health Ministry said in a notice on its Web site late Saturday. Tests confirmed she was infected with the H5N1 bird flu virus, it said. It did not say how she was infected or what she was doing in Hunan. All the people who had close contact with the girl were under medical observation, the ministry said, and so far no one else has been found ill. The case comes at a worrisome time for authorities as tens of millions of people are on the move traveling between cities and rural hometowns for Chinese New Year, which begins on Jan. 26. The Agricultural Ministry has said it will step up checks before the holiday. A 19-year-old woman died from the bird flu virus at the beginning of January in a Beijing hospital after contact with poultry. The World Health Organization said the case did not appear to signal a new public health threat.

Rampaging wild elephants kill 3 in northeast India

GAUHATI, India (AP)—A herd of nearly 150 hungry elephants rampaged through a village in India's remote northeast, trampling to death a young family as they slept in their hut, a resident and a wildlife official said Saturday. The Asiatic elephants destroyed four homes in Assam state's Karbi Anglong village Friday night, said resident Rimi Marak. "The herd was just too large. The villagers could do nothing," Marak said. A farmer, his wife and their 5-year-old daughter died in the incident, he said. The herd left a nearby forest reserve in search of food nearly two weeks ago, said state forestry officer M.K. Dhar. Forest guards had tried in vain to drive the elephants back using firecrackers and lighting torches, Dhar told The Associated Press. The region is home to some 5,000 wild elephants, whose natural habitat has been increasingly diminished by human development. Conservationists say wild elephant attacks have killed more than 700 people in Assam in the past 17 years. "We take pride at the large elephant population in our region, but the increasing man-elephant conflict following the shrinkage in their habitat due to the growing human population is turning out to be a huge challenge," said Pradyut Bordoloi, a former state forest and environment minister.

World

Israel implements unilateral Gaza cease-fire

AP

Palestinian demonstrators wearing clothes resembling the uniforms worn by Jews in the Nazi death camps during the Holocaust, shout anti-Israel slogans, during a demonstration against Israel's military operations in Gaza, at the center of the West Bank city of Ramallah, Saturday, Jan. 17, 2009.

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel implemented a unilateral cease-fire early Sunday in its 22-day offensive that turned Gaza neighborhoods into battlegrounds and dealt a stinging blow to the Islamic militants of Hamas. But Israeli troops will stay in the Palestinian territory for now and Hamas threatened to keep fighting until they leave.

In announcing the cease-fire late Saturday, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Israel had achieved its goals and more.

"Hamas was hit hard, in its military arms and in its government institutions. Its leaders are in hiding and many of its men have been killed," Olmert said.

Israel launched the offensive on Dec. 27 to stop years of rocket fire from Gaza at southern Israeli towns. But the rockets did not stop coming throughout the assault. Militants fired about 30 rockets into Israel on Saturday, eight of them around the time Olmert spoke.

More than 1,100 Palestinians have been killed in the offensive, about half of them civilians, according to Palestinian and U.N. officials. At least 13 Israelis have also been killed.

According to Olmert's statement, the cease-fire went into effect at 2 a.m. local time (7 p.m. EST). The military warned in a statement early Sunday that attacks on soldiers or civilians "will be met with a harsh response."

If Hamas holds its fire, the military "will weigh pulling out of Gaza at a time that befits us," Olmert said. If not, Israel "will continue to act to defend our residents."

Israel's insistence on keeping troops in Gaza raises the specter of a stalemate with Hamas, which has insisted that it will not respect any cease-fire until Israel pulls out of the territory, with a population of 1.4 million.

Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum in Gaza said a unilateral cease-fire was not enough to end Hamas' resistance—echoing the stance taken earlier by Hamas leaders in exile.

"The occupier must halt his fire immediately and withdraw from our land and lift his blockade and open all crossings and we will not accept any one Zionist soldier on our land, regardless of the price that it costs," Barhoum said.

In the hours leading up to the vote by the 12-member Security Cabinet, and even as they met, Israel kept bombarding Gaza.

Gaza civilians struggle with bombardments

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP)—The group of boys gather defiantly to play soccer each day, war-weary after three weeks of near-constant shelling and dearly in need of some childhood release.

This border town of a couple hundred thousand people has been especially hard hit during the 22-day Israeli assault against Hamas militants in Gaza as Israel seeks to destroy hundreds of tunnels used to smuggle in weapons—but which also provide an economic lifeline for destitute Gazans.

Yet militants were nowhere to be seen Saturday in Rafah, a run-down frontier town where symbols of Hamas authority—from police stations to prisons and mosques- have been flattened. Militants shed their fatigues at the beginning of the offensive and have largely melted back in to the civilian population.

The children, along with much of the population, have grown indifferent to the roaring fighter jets overhead and the all-powerful thuds of explosions nearby.

"We're not afraid of the bombs anymore, we play football everyday," 13-year-old Mohammed Gheiss said Saturday. Gheiss is the goalkeeper for the small team of boys playing in a relatively safe wasteland about a mile from the more dangerous border area.

"What's sad is that we're not as many as before," he said, pointing at the improvised tent nearby for the wake of his friend, Eissa Ermallat.

Eissa, 12, died a day earlier, hit by an unmanned Israeli warplane attack while collecting firewood, said his father, Mohammed Ermallat, who led the group of mourners.

Christian killed in northern Iraqi city

BAGHDAD (AP)—The Christian owner of a car repair shop was killed execution-style in Mosul, police said Saturday, raising concern about the possibility of new attacks against the religious minority in the northern Iraqi city.

The body of the 36-year-old man, who was shot in the head, was found Thursday, according to police and hospital officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media.

Another Christian man, an engineer in the city's water department, was kidnapped in early January but was released four days later after his family paid a $50,000 ransom.

Nobody claimed responsibility for the killing or the kidnapping, but they followed a pattern of violence and intimidation that sent thousands of Christians fleeing from their homes in Mosul in the fall.

Bassem Balu, an official with the Democratic Assyrian Movement, sought to maintain calm, saying the motives for this week's killing were not yet known. The movement is the largest Christian party.

"For the time being, I do not think that this will slow the return of the Christians to Mosul," he said. "I hope that this murder won't signal the start of a new campaign against the Christians in Mosul."

Some Mosul residents have filtered back since the fall exodus, but others remain with relatives in the safer countryside or have sought refuge in neighboring Syria despite government pledges of financial support and protection.

Rights group: Uganda rebels killed 620 in Congo

DAKAR, Senegal (AP)—Ugandan rebels in eastern Congo have ruthlessly killed at least 620 people in the past month, and vulnerable civilians in the region desperately need protection, human rights groups said Saturday.

Human Rights Watch said many of the attacks carried out by Lord's Resistance Army rebels appeared to have been premeditated, and victims' skulls were crushed with wooden bats and axes.

Researchers from the New York-based organization gathered testimony and evidence on a two-week mission to the region with staff from the Congolese rights group Justice Plus.

They said that in one attack on Christmas Day in the village of Batande, rebels slaughtered the men and boys with blows to the head and raped women and girls in a nearby forest before killing them by crushing their skulls. Some 80 people died, they said.

"One of the few survivors, a 72-year-old man who arrived late for Christmas lunch, hid in the bushes and watched in horror as his wife, children and grandchildren were killed," Human Rights Watch said. The man said only six people survived.

After the massacre, the rebels "ate the Christmas feast the villagers had prepared, and then slept among the dead bodies before continuing on their trail of destruction and death" through another 12 villages.

In Faradje, about 150 miles (240 kilometers) from Batande, another group of rebels killed 143 people in a similarly gruesome attack in which they also abducted 160 children and 20 adults, tying them together and forcing them to carry looted goods. They also burned 940 houses, three primary schools and nine churches.

There were simultaneous Christmas attacks on several northeastern Congo villages near the Sudan border, Human Rights Watch said.

But it added in a statement that attacks are continuing.

WORLD BRIEFS

Report: Russia and Ukraine reach gas deal

MOSCOW (AP)—State news agency RIA-Novosti is reporting that the prime ministers of Russia and Ukraine have reached a deal to settle the gas dispute that has shut off supplies to Europe. Under the reported deal, Ukraine will pay 20 percent less than the European price for the gas this year. This means a substantial increase for Ukraine in the first quarter but the price could fall significantly later in the year as gas prices are expected to drop. RIA-Novosti says the deal was announced early Sunday by Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. The news agency cites Ukraine Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko as saying all gas supplies will begin flowing once the contract is signed by the two countries' gas companies.

Zimbabwe's opposition leader returns home

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP)—Zimbabwe's main opposition leader returned home Saturday to face a dilemma: participate as a junior partner in a lopsided government of national unity or let President Robert Mugabe regain total control. Morgan Tsvangirai of the Movement for Democratic Change insisted he would not be bulldozed into agreement at a meeting Monday with bitter rival Mugabe and the presidents of South Africa, Mozambique and regional mediator Thabo Mbeki. There is acute concern that the longstanding political deadlock is exacerbating the country's economic meltdown. In a rare visit, the head of the U.N. children's agency said the 2,200 deaths from cholera were just a small example of the humanitarian crisis. "The cholera outbreak is the tip of the iceberg," said UNICEF head Ann Veneman "Over half the population is receiving food aid, health centers have closed and when the school term starts there is no guarantee that there will be enough teachers."

US fugitives unsure Cuba thaw is good news

HAVANA (AP)—William Potts calls himself the "Homesick Hijacker." U.S. authorities have another name for him: fugitive harbored by an enemy government—one of dozens of Americans hiding in communist Cuba. Almost 25 years ago, he smuggled a pistol onto a commercial flight, diverted the plane to Havana, and spent 13 1/2 years in a Cuban prison for air piracy. Now the Mount Vernon, N.Y., native has written to President-elect Barack Obama seeking a pardon and hoping U.S.-Cuba relations will improve and he'll be able to come home. Others among the more than 70 American fugitives in Cuba fear the opposite—that a thaw in the nearly 50-year-old freeze between neighbors will put them within the reach of U.S. law. "It's not a good time to raise my name up there," said Charlie Hill, who was accused in the slaying of a New Mexico state trooper and hijacked a plane to Cuba in 1971. "Things are going good. I don't want to be in the limelight." Neither government would comment on the subject because these are sensitive times—a change of U.S. administrations, and indications that both Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro are ready to make tentative moves toward detente.

Health & Fitness

Put the mettle to the pedal

By JEANNINE STEIN
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This week, people are likely realizing that making resolutions is much easier than keeping them. Many are already faltering on their fitness goals, finding it difficult to brave the morning or evening chill. But don't reach for the doughnuts—we've got help from David Brinton. He is a former Olympian, and currently an elite USA Cycling coach and president and founder of Technik Sports Inc., who takes us through four weeks of bike training. Brinton explains how to work out like a pro and avoid beginner burnout, and he suggests some tools that make the process easier.

Getting started

Before you even hop on that bike, set your training schedule—and make it a realistic one. Brinton suggests starting with three to four days a week of cycling, gradually working toward a goal of five to six days a week by the end of eight weeks. "Often, new riders are so excited and jump into riding six days a week," he says, "then realize it's not manageable."

■ Set some goals, such as completing a race, or even one as grand as completing a "century," a 100-mile ride done in one day (there are races with shorter distances as well). That, Brinton says, has bragging rights, and it isn't as overwhelming as it sounds. "When you start recognizing your progress from week to week, then you realize, `Maybe I could actually keep going.' "

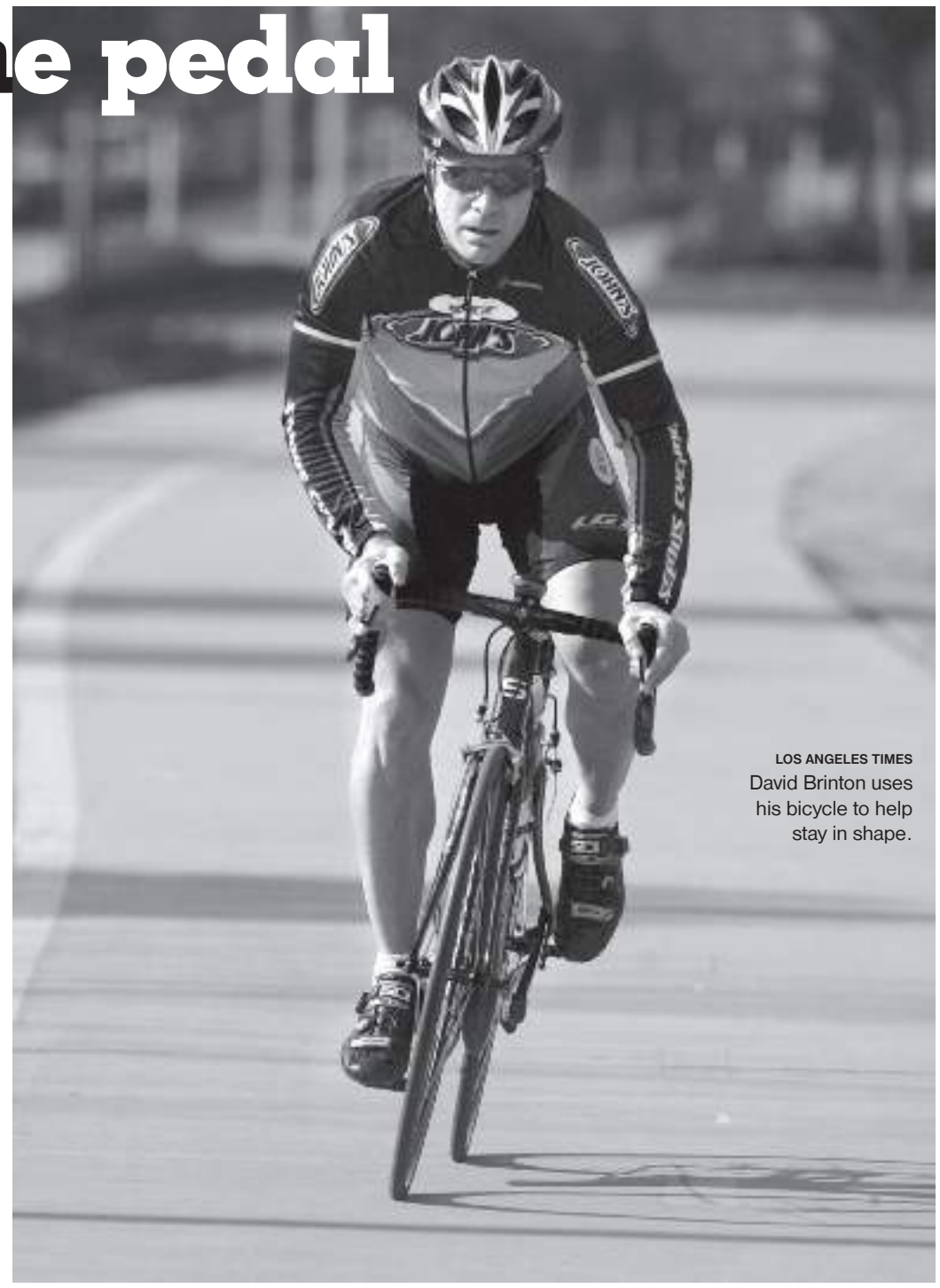
■ Keep a training diary. "It gives you a reference of where you started and where you are today," Brinton says. "If you time yourself going up a hill at a particular heart rate, how do you know if you've improved if you haven't been logging it?" Seeing speeds and distances increase can be motivating. Brinton suggests going into a fair amount of detail in the log, and include distance, time spent on the bike, heart rate and how you felt.

■ Get your bike fitted properly. Rank beginners might need the help of an experienced bike store employee or cycling coach for this—there are even people who just fit bikes. Don't skip this part, Briton says; a saddle that's too low or too far forward, for example, can strain key tendons.

■ Take a bike maintenance class, or have someone show you how to do basic repairs such as flat tires. It's also a good idea to practice those repairs.

■ Consider two gadgets in particular: One is a heart rate monitor, which can help determine various training zone levels. For the first few weeks, you should pay attention to your heart rate at various levels of intensity. Make mental notes of those numbers, and log them in if you can remember. Also be aware of how you feel at those heart rates; for example, at 165 beats, you might feel like you're putting out a great effort, while at 150, you're able to sustain that pace for a great distance.

The other useful device is a bike computer, which calculates pedaling cadence. "Many times, riders cycle at too low of an RPM," he says, which can hinder acceleration, since it demands more power from the rider.



LOS ANGELES TIMES
David Brinton uses his bicycle to help stay in shape.

Now for the riding ...

Weeks 1 and 2

Do a one- to two-hour ride at a sustainable pace on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday, with a longer ride on Saturday. Whenever possible, try to pick safe roads with few lights and stop signs. If none are close, you may have to drive to a better location.

For the weekday rides, "the idea is to start off easier. . . . You don't want to have a week where you go so hard and so long that you're incapable of increasing mileage the next week." Doing too much too soon is also a formula for injury and burnout.

The major goals of these two weeks are learning how to ride at a consistent pace, getting the body used to constant pedaling, and maintaining a steady heart rate. You should be breathing hard, but able to sustain a conversation, talking in brief sentences.

That longer Saturday ride should be mostly flat terrain for 15 to 30 miles, with a 10-mile increase each week. On Sundays, do a shorter ride with some hill work, which will boost the cardiovascular system by making it work harder. But don't kill yourself. "You're not climbing to set a new record," Brinton says. He recommends cycling on a 4 percent to 6 percent grade.

Weeks 3 and 4

Maintain the same riding schedule, adding the usual mileage on Saturday. Also add a one-hour ride on Wednesday that's the same intensity as (or slightly lower than) your regular pace on Tuesday and Thursday.

Now it's time to put those heart rate monitor numbers to use.

Determining your lactate threshold will help set up various training zone levels, useful in building cardiovascular endurance, and in establishing when recovery time is needed. Lactate or anaerobic threshold is the point at which the body moves from working in an aerobic zone to an anaerobic zone, where blood lactate levels rise (causing muscle ache and fatigue) and the body burns more carbs than fat.

One way to establish this threshold is to ride at a sustained effort as hard and fast as you can for 20 minutes, trying to keep your heart rate steady. Your average heart rate is your lactate threshold, which is also 90 percent to 93 percent of your maximum heart rate. Do this test a few times to establish an average threshold level. As you become more fit, your lactate threshold level will likely rise, making it easier to both ride for longer periods and cycle at more intense levels. According to Brinton, cycling at 10 to 15 beats below your lactate threshold is the most efficient way to develop cardiovascular endurance and effectively filter lactic acid from the body. If maintaining this level becomes difficult, it could be an indication of overtraining.

During these weeks, Brinton suggests concentrating on pedaling mechanics. Instead of mashing down on the pedals and generating power just on the down stroke, think about the muscles you're using throughout the 360-degree range of motion. Thinking of the circle as a clock, from about 4 to 8 focus on the hamstrings; from about 7 to 12 the hip flexors, and from about 10 to 2 the quadriceps. Becoming a more proficient peddler will eventually increase speed.

Pedaling cadence, he says, should be about 85 to 95 RPMs on the flats, and 65 to 75 on climbs.

After four weeks, aim for continuing to increase your Saturday mileage by 10 miles, and add a few miles of climbing to the Tuesday and Thursday rides.

At this point, if a race or becoming a more adept rider is still the goal, it may be time to hire a coach or join a cycling group for additional training tips and experience riding with others. USA Cycling (www.usacycling.org) lists coaches on its Web site.

With Heartfelt Gratitude

We, the family of the late

†Ricardo Edward Sablan Santos
"Rick Chungi"

wish to express our heartfelt appreciation to all our relatives, friends and neighbors for your kind expression of love, sympathy, personal assistance and support during this difficult time of sorrow in the passing of our beloved into caring hands of our Creator.

To all who have supported us in one way or another, for your presence at Eucharistic Celebration and Interment. For the many acts of kindness and generosity which gave us the strength and courage to endure our loss – We thank you.

DANGKULO NA SI YU'US MA'ASE.
May God continue to bless us all.

The Family

Life & Style

Minami makes 'beautiful waves' on Saipan

By JAYVEE VALLEJERA
EDITOR

To find the best kept secret in town, head north to the Palms Resort Saipan, where a restaurant is creating a sensation among the lunchtime crowd for its wide selection of authentic Japanese cuisine, imposing architecture, stunning view, exceptional service, and the kind of prices that will keep you coming back for more.

Minami is Japanese for "beautiful waves" and that is exactly the kind of impression the Minami Restaurant is creating since it opened on Nov. 24, 2008. Barely two months in operation, the restaurant is generating a lot of buzz, mainly via word-of-mouth, due to the exceptional quality of the food, the wide selections available, and prices that don't put a dent in one's pocket.

It doesn't hurt that the package comes with such a fantastic ambiance. Sheathed in floor-to-ceiling glass walls that face the Saipan lagoon on two sides, guests have an uninterrupted view of the Palms Resort's manicured gardens and artificial river, while natural light literally floods the place, complementing the stark, clean lines of the Japanese architecture within. Small touches also enliven the experience, such as the stiff, snowy white table napkins, the lotus-shaped wasabi, and a large, almost architectural table that could comfortably seat 20.

It all comes down to the food, however, and that is where the formidable duo of Palms Resort General Manager Mustafa Issa and Executive Chef David Jones made the biggest impact.

JAYVEE VALLEJERA

The chef's station features various Japanese cuisine staples.

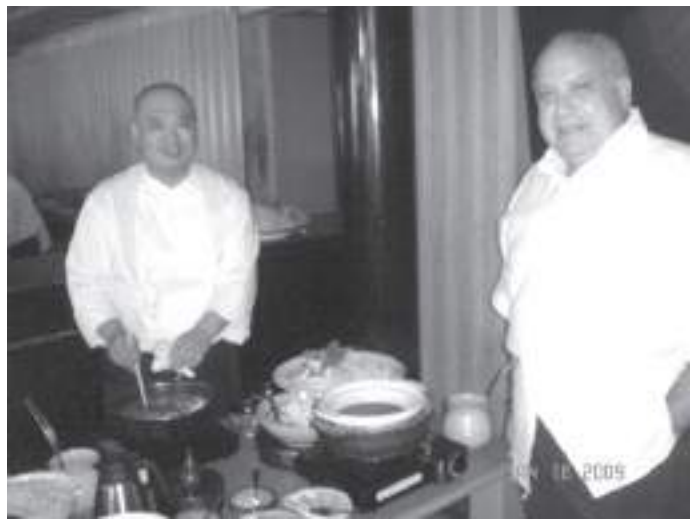
Palms Resort Executive Chef David Jones places some tempura on the plate of guest Mario Taitano.

JAYVEE VALLEJERA

Jones, who joined Palms Resort just this month, has transformed the Minami Restaurant into the go-to place for lunch. Served buffet-style, guests are offered a wide variety of food, with the chef station featuring several types of sushi, tempura, and other Japanese staples. They also have a live station for sukiyaki and other Japanese noodles and soups, appetizers that are meals in themselves and a dessert station that is infinitely superior to anything else on the island.

"We have made many changes to our menu like increasing the number of selections, improving the quality of the food, and coming up with a creative selection everyday," said Jones. "We also made changes to the food's presentation and made improvements in our service."

Cristina Lustre, Palms Resort's Food and Beverage Manager, said these changes have resulted in an uptick in the number of guests, who check out Minami mainly due to positive word-of-mouth. "Our busiest days are usually Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays."



Palms Resort General Manager Mustafa Issa.

JAYVEE VALLEJERA

Minami Restaurant also makes it a point to change its menu on a regular basis to provide variety, said Issa. "We are conscious of it because we have many repeat customers and we don't want them to get bored with the same food over and over again," he said.

Although the Minami Restaurant is at the moment open only for lunch, Jones said they are now working toward offering breakfast, lunch and dinner "possibly in about a month's time."

Issa said they have even grander plans for the restaurant, including theme nights, an a la carte menu, and banquet services for weddings and other local parties.

All these, he said, are intended to create a loyal clientele base within the Saipan community. "I have been fortunate enough to have worked on Saipan for so many years and one thing I've learned is that any business here cannot succeed without the local community," said Issa, who used to be the GM for the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

"The locals here cannot be fooled. They will always go for quality and value for money and that is what we are trying to do here," he added.

Affable, charming, and gracious, Issa was in his element during this interview, on first-name basis with almost everybody in the lunch crowd and greeting each one with a kiss on the cheek or a handshake, peppered with light banter.

"We want everybody to feel at home here, we want to make them feel at home," he explained. "We know your family, we know the names of your kids, we want to look after everybody in your family."

"At the same time, the locals cannot be fooled. Sincerity is very important," he stressed.

That rapport with guests and the attentive service provided by the wait staff add up to a meal that is as outstanding as it is filling, a feast not just for the palate but for all the senses. With the way things are going, the Minami Restaurant will definitely not be kept a secret for long.

The Minami Restaurant can seat up to a hundred guests, while its mezzanine floor, which feature tatami rooms, can seat an additional 30 people.

IF YOU GO

- Minami Restaurant is open Monday to Saturday, from 11am to 2pm.
- $22 for adults, $15 for children, with 20 percent local discount.
- San Roque Club members can avail of discounts of up to 50 percent. Call 322-3311 for inquiries.

The Minami Restaurant features stark, clean lines of Japanese architecture. Foreground shows a large, geometric shaped table that could comfortably seat 20.

JAYVEE VALLEJERA

From left, Valerie B. Camacho, Palms Resort Saipan Executive Office Manager and Purchasing Manager; Cristina Lustre, Palms Resort's Food and Beverage Manager; and Palms Resort Executive Chef David Jones pose at the sukiyaki station.

JAYVEE VALLEJERA

The appetizer station.

Much change in Biggie Smalls' neighborhood

NEW YORK (AP)—In rapper Biggie Smalls' old Brooklyn neighborhood, the building that once housed a coin laundry is now a plastic surgeon's office. A block away, a wine bar sells "artisanal" cheeses and meats.

Much has changed where the late superstar spent all but a few years of his life and sometimes sold crack cocaine before spinning vivid tales of his street exploits into millions of record sales.

"It's completely different," said Voletta Wallace, Smalls' mother, who moved into the area in 1969 and left after her son was killed, at age 24, in a 1997 drive-by shooting in Los Angeles. "It's a place for the better."

Wallace is a producer of "Notorious," the Smalls movie biography that hit theaters on Friday, and was on the set during filming in the area.

AP

In this March 18, 1997 file photo, an unidentified neighbor of rapper Biggie Smalls, also known as Notorious B.I.G., top right, watches the funeral procession pass as mourners line the streets near the building where the slain rapper once lived on St. James Place in the Brooklyn borough of New York.

In interviews, she and other longtime residents and business owners reminisced about Smalls and reflected on the neighborhood's changes, which have occasionally sparked tension.

"Much has changed but much remains the same," said City Councilwoman Letitia James, whose district includes the neighborhood.

"In the movie the drug trade was a predominant feature," she said. "Crack was at its height. Some of what happened and occurred and existed during Biggie's time is still on Fulton Street, and we're trying to address that."

"But we've come a very long way," James added.

She emphasized the neighborhood's racial and class diversity. There's less graffiti and more white, Asian, Latino and professional residents as well as blue-collar workers, artists, and students.

On Fulton, the major commercial artery where the crack trade flourished in the 1980s and '90s—and where Smalls sometimes wowed sidewalk crowds with freestyles, making up rhymes on the spot—there's now a mosque and a "coffee lounge" offering organic hot chocolate, chai latte and macchiato. The video-game arcade is now a restaurant of traditional West African food.

Smalls, who also used the stage name The Notorious B.I.G. but who was born Christopher Wallace, lived with his mother in a seven-room apartment at 226 St. James Place.

Voletta Wallace, a Jamaican immigrant, taught preschool by day while earning her master's and attending Jehovah's Witness services in the evenings.

Young Chris had a talent for visual art and attended Catholic school and public high school but dropped out after being lured away by the crack trade's fast money and accoutrements.

"My son wasn't the pauperized kid he made himself out to be," his mother told writer Cheo Hodari Coker, who co-wrote the screenplay for "Notorious."

Although B.I.G. claimed the Bedford-Stuyvesant area as home ("Live from Bedford-Stuyvesant, the livest one representing BK to the fullest"), his old building has been part of the Clinton Hill Historic District, west of Bed-Stuy, since 1981.

In the late 19th century, the neighborhood of mansions, Victorian row houses and brownstones was home to some of the city's wealthiest white residents, including the Underwoods (as in typewriters), the Pfizers and Bristols (FDA-approved drugs), and Charles Pratt (oil).

"The Pfizers of Clinton Hill gave way to street pharmacists selling heroin and cocaine on the corner," Coker wrote in the 2004 book "Unbelievable: The Life, Death, and Afterlife of The Notorious B.I.G."

Blacks from Harlem, the South and the Caribbean began moving into the neighborhood in earnest in the 20th century. By the 1970s and '80s mostly black neighborhoods like Clinton Hill, which contained solid black middle and working classes, were lumped in with the grittier Bed-Stuy.

Since then, with Manhattanites and others moving deep into Brooklyn in search of less pricey real estate, real estate agents have revived names like Clinton Hill and Fort Greene to disassociate those areas from Bed-Stuy, which many outsiders associated with blight, crime and poverty, people familiar with the neighborhoods say.

Apartments in B.I.G.'s old building have been converted to condominiums, and brownstones in the neighborhood have sold for as much as $3 million. Studio apartments are advertised for $1,250 a month while one-bedrooms rent for as much as $1,700.

Current residents include actor Jeffrey Wright and his wife, actress Carmen Ejogo; actor Malik Yoba; actress Rosie Perez; rapper-actor Mos Def; and rapper Talib Kweli.

Some older residents, most of them black, complain about the higher rents and about how newer residents (usually white) try to change things in an "insulting" and "disrespectful" manner.

Some newer residents gripe about "noise" coming from black churches, and about young black men rehearsing their rap music in parks, talking to each other on stoops and sitting in playgrounds, maybe reading a book or magazine, without children.

"What we've attempted to do is bridge the gap, the divide," James said.

B.I.G.'s debut CD, 1994's "Ready to Die," helped reenergize the East Coast rap scene, which up to that point had been overshadowed by West Coast rap.

Three years later, on March 9, 1997, B.I.G. was killed. Six months earlier, rapper Tupac Shakur, 25, died following a drive-by shooting in Las Vegas. Police have yet to solve either killing.

4 stabbed during club's party for 'Notorious' film

NEW YORK (AP)—Police say four men were stabbed at a New York City nightclub advertising an after-party for the film premiere of "Notorious" about rapper Biggie Smalls.

Police said Saturday a 21-year-old victim stabbed numerous times was in critical condition at Brookdale Hospital. Three others were stable.

The Djumbala club is in the Canarsie section of Brooklyn. Police did not immediately release further information.

While the party had been promoted as the "official" after-party, "Notorious" distributor, Fox Searchlight, said it was not related.

Smalls was born Christopher Wallace and also used the stage name "Notorious B.I.G."

His debut CD, 1994's "Ready to Die," helped reenergize East Coast rap. He was killed in Los Angeles in 1997.

In Loving Memory Of

Juan Quitugua Kapileo

(Juan Iori)

January 05, 1949 - January 13, 2009

In his new life, he now joins his:

Parents: †Felipe Musuk Kapileo & †Faustina Quitugua Kapileo
Parents-in-laws: †Joseph Jesus & †Sarah Suda
Brother & Sisters: †Antonio Q. Kapileo, †Cynthia Q. Kapileo
Children: †Julia & †Jay Eric S. Kapileo
Grandchildren: †Cristina Edwina & †Alandadonn K. Malwelbug

He will be missed and his memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Wife:
Julita (Iori) Suda Kapileo

Children & Grandchildren:
TM Suda (Jung Tsua)
Kristina K./Lorenzo L. Norita (Larry John Baldemero & Frankie Byron)
Valerie K./Finian Malwelbug (Anthony John, Alvin, David Lionel, Donn Travis & Jewel Siaweribeg)
Antonio S./Ida A. Kapileo (Julia Faustina, Phillip Joe & Kyle Kawika)
Juan S. Kapileo/Florence S. Calvo (Sion, Juan Carlos & J'dean Leilisheng)
Jonathan S./Joanna D. Kapileo (Melvin John, Erica Nathania & Peka Angelo)
Jerry S. Kapileo
Eric S. Kapileo

Reared Son & Spouse:
Rego Jicko/Helen Esetok (Drauzen Zeus & Caitlen Alysse)

Siblings & Spouse:

Dionicia K./Singeru Techur	Luis Q./Pauline DLG. Kapileo
Canice Q. /Veronica T. Kapileo	Jacinta Q. Kapileo
Ana K. Kaiser	Ignacia K./Ferdous Bhuiyan
Felipe Q. /Esther K. Kapileo	Jesus Q. Kapileo
Joseph Q./Teresa P. Kapileo	Fabian Nick Q./Ursula A. Kapileo

Brothers/Sisters-in-law & Spouse:

Markus/Yuri Suda	Katherine S./Eddie Omar
Johanes/Loreta Suda	Baldazar/Natalie Suda
Sakie/Dennis	Bibiana/Mais

He is also survived by numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews and friends.

Daily rosary is being offered at the family's residence in Tanapag at 7:30 p.m. On Tuesday, January 20, 2009 at 3:00 p.m. the remains of Juan Q. Kapileo will be escorted from CHC to the family's residence. The mass of Christian burial and Interment will be on Wednesday, January 21,2009 at 11:00 a.m. at Santa Remedios Church followed by burial at the Tanapag cemetery.
Thank you all for your thoughts and prayers.

Spike Lee's a Sundance kid with 'Passing Strange'

PARK CITY, Utah (AP)—The timing always was off for Spike Lee and the Sundance Film Festival, which had never managed to land a movie from the maverick who has been at the vanguard of independent cinema for nearly 25 years.

So it's appropriate the film finally bringing Lee to the top indie showcase has its roots in the Sundance Institute's theater lab, where the Tony Award-winning rock musical "Passing Strange" was developed.

Lee's Sundance premiere came Friday with his dazzling take on "Passing Strange," crafted from the musical's final Broadway performances.

The director behind such films as "Do the Right Thing," "Malcolm X" and "Inside Man" has debuted films at Cannes, Venice and other festivals, but he and Sundance previously had been out of sync.

"It's because of where the schedule is, where the festival is in the schedule. January never works out for me when I shoot," Lee, 51, said in an interview. "I've never had something that's been available in January."

"Passing Strange" is the semi-autobiographical creation of musician Stew, who developed the project with musical partner Heidi Rodewald and Annie Dorsen, director of the stage play.

AP

Director Spike Lee speaks to the media on Main Street during the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, on Thursday, Jan. 15, 2009.

With Stew as combination narrator, band leader, stage manager and puppeteer for the characters, the film traces the odyssey of a young black man called Youth (Daniel Breaker), who breaks with his mother's down-home adherence to church and family and seeks to reinvent himself overseas.

He progresses from pot-smoking choir rebel and acid-tripping punk rocker in his home town of Los Angeles to free-spirited bohemian in Amsterdam and finally to cultural icon in Berlin, where he finds musical success by "passing as ghetto," exploiting a south-central L.A. background he never really experienced.

Lee first saw "Passing Strange" when it was playing off-Broadway. He went back to see it again several times on Broadway, where it won Stew the Tony for best book of a musical last year.

"I was knocked out. It was great," Lee said. "I knew nothing about Stew and Heidi. It was just `Hey, there's this show. Check it out.' I was amazed by it." Approached by one of the play's producers to do a film version, Lee thought about shooting it as a "movie movie," a full cinematic adaptation. He ultimately wound up doing it as a filmed play, keeping the staging and minimalist set design intact.

Lee shot the last three Broadway performances in front of live crowds, then gathered the cast and musicians again the next day to film the entire play again without an audience so he could put the camera on stage for close-ups, dolly shots and other camera coverage.

The film was edited together from all four performances. Along with Stew, Rodewald and Breaker, the cast includes Eisa Davis as Youth's mother and De'Adre Aziza, Colman Domingo, Chad Goodridge and Rebecca Naomi Jones in multiple roles.

Even with a career that includes Academy Award nominations for original screenplay ("Do the Right Thing") and documentary ("4 Little Girls"), Lee was like many other Sundance novices, thrilled that he had a chance to meet festival overseer Robert Redford and hoping potential buyers like his film.

"We're like everybody else who's brought a film here at Sundance, trying to get a distribution deal," Lee said. "So we'll see what happens."

Lee thinks "Passing Strange" could have a long shelf life on the big screen.

"I think it's going to be a cult film. I grew up remembering the midnight shows of 'Rocky Horror,'" Lee said. "I could definitely see this playing midnight shows for years."

Oprah `disappointed' by debunked Holocaust story

Oprah Winfrey broke her silence Friday about former guest Herman Rosenblat, saying she's "very disappointed" in his now discredited story about meeting his future wife in a Nazi concentration camp.

"That's what happens with lies," Winfrey said on an episode of "The Oprah Winfrey Show" that aired Friday. "They get bigger and bigger and bigger."

Rosenblat, a 79-year-old resident of North Miami Beach, Fla., and his wife Roma have appeared twice on Winfrey's show. Winfrey said he had planned to appear again to "explain himself," but the man's lawyers scuttled that.

Rosenblat's tale of a little girl throwing apples over a barbed-wire fence to him every day at a sub-camp of Buchenwald in the 1940s was endearing, Winfrey said.

"And he told that story and I was crying, everybody was crying," Winfrey said.

Winfrey noted that the couple did have an unusual story.

"They have been married for 50 years and he was, indeed, in a concentration camp and so was she," Winfrey said.

Berkley Books, an imprint of Penguin Group (USA), had planned to release Rosenblat's memoir "Angel at the Fence" in February. But after scholars, friends and family members challenged him, Rosenblat acknowledged the story was untrue and Berkley pulled the book.

AP

In this Dec. 5, 2008 file photo, Oprah Winfrey arrives at The Hollywood Reporter's annual Women in Entertainment Breakfast in Beverly Hills, Calif.

A planned feature film about Rosenblat's story still is scheduled to begin production this year, with producer Harris Salomon saying the script may note the "fabricated elements of their wartime love story."

Until Friday, Winfrey let her Web site do the talking, adding a small disclaimer that "on December 27, 2008, Herman Rosenblat admitted to fictionalizing portions of his life story, including how he met his wife." As of Friday night, Rosenblat's discredited tale remained listed on the site as the first example of "Love Lessons From Amazing Couples."

Winfrey's site also refers to another discredited guest, James Frey. In 2005, Winfrey chose Frey's "A Million Little Pieces" for her book club, but later brought him back on the show and chewed him out after he had acknowledged fabricating substantial parts of his memoir.

Gayle King, a Winfrey friend, said on her pal's show Friday that Rosenblat's story also disappointed her. But King took issue with some media outlets apparently saying Winfrey again has been deceived.

"I was very disappointed because when the story first broke, the big headline was `Oprah Duped Again,'" King said. "I called Oprah and I said, `I'm so tired of you being the whipping boy for this hoax because he didn't just dupe you—he duped a lot of people.'"

Swayze checks out of hospital, publicist says

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Patrick Swayze has been released from the hospital one week after checking himself in with pneumonia, his publicist said Friday.

Publicist Annett Wolf would not elaborate on the actor's condition but told The Associated Press he "is well enough to have been released." He is now resting at his Los Angeles home, Wolf said.

Swayze, who has battled pancreatic cancer for the last year, checked himself into a hospital Jan. 9 for observation after contracting pneumonia.

The 56-year-old announced last March he was suffering from a particularly deadly form of cancer. Some reports gave him only weeks to live, but his doctor said his situation was more optimistic.

Swayze told ABC's Barbara Walters last week that his battle with cancer put him "through hell" while he pushed ahead on a new TV series.

Swayze had been working on a drama series "The Beast," which premiered this week on the A&E network. Producers have said they found out Swayze had cancer four hours after learning A&E had picked up the series. They also said filming was completed on all episodes of the first season and hoped Swayze could continue in the role for a second season.

In the series, he plays an FBI veteran who trains a rookie partner played by Travis Fimmel.

AP

In this Nov. 28, 2005 file photo, actor Patrick Swayze poses for the photographers, prior to the premiere of his new film "Keeping Mum" at a Leicester Square cinema in central London.

Dr. King's prayers for peace resonate in a troubled world

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR READERS: Today we celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.—the great American civil rights leader, martyred in 1968, who dedicated his life to furthering equal rights for all Americans.

When Dr. King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, he said: "Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love."

With bloodshed and violence still such destructive forces in this world, there is much to be learned from his insight, his wisdom and his example.

ABBY

■■■

DEAR ABBY: A friend of mine and his wife divorced several years ago. When their son turned 18, he changed his name to his mother's maiden name. I personally think it's a slap in the father's face. Have you heard of this before, and don't you think it's mean?

CURIOUS IN OHIO

DEAR CURIOUS: I have heard of it in the case of a child who, for whatever reason, has become alienated from his or her parent. Is it mean? It certainly isn't a compliment, because it indicates the child does not want to be identified with the father, nor to be reminded that the man ever existed. Before you judge the young man, you should remember that there is always a reason.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: "Weary Elves in Tennessee" asked you whether a Christmas tree should be taken down before or after the New Year.

Christmas trees are a matter of personal taste and were not part of the Christian practice until fairly recently in our history. The Christmas feast itself lasts for 12 days, until Twelfth Night, Jan. 5, the eve of the Feast of the Epiphany, which falls on Jan. 6, a more ancient feast than Christmas. (Many of your readers may have grown up in households where gifts were exchanged on Jan. 6, recalling the gifts of the Magi.)

Lately, more and more Christians are trying to keep the season of Advent: the four weeks preceding the feast of Christmas. If one wants to honor the quiet anticipation of Advent, a simple wreath or an undecorated tree makes a wonderful December home addition. The household can gradually adorn the tree in the last week before Christmas.

On Christmas Eve, when darkness falls, the tree is lit for the first time. It is lit every night through Epiphany, which is also called the Feast of Lights. Jan. 7 might be a good time to take down the tree, though many Christians wait until the following Sunday evening (an extension of the Epiphany feast), or on or about the 20th day after Christmas.

As Episcopalian Christians, we usually strive for "via media"—the middle way—avoiding extremes. I would go for the 12 days of Christmas, a solid and rich historical and spiritual tradition of celebrating the feast. But as a former volunteer fireman, I loved your advice to "Weary Elves," Abby. By all means, DO take the tree down when the needles are overly dry and get it to the recycling lot.

THE REV. MARK STANGER, CANON PRECENTOR,
GRACE CATHEDRAL, SAN FRANCISCO

DEAR FR. STANGER: Thank you for chiming in on this one. In this case, the "epiphany" was mine.

■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

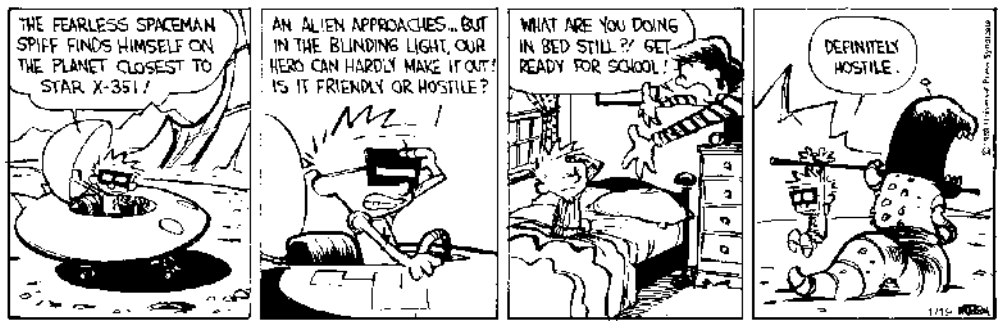
■■■

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

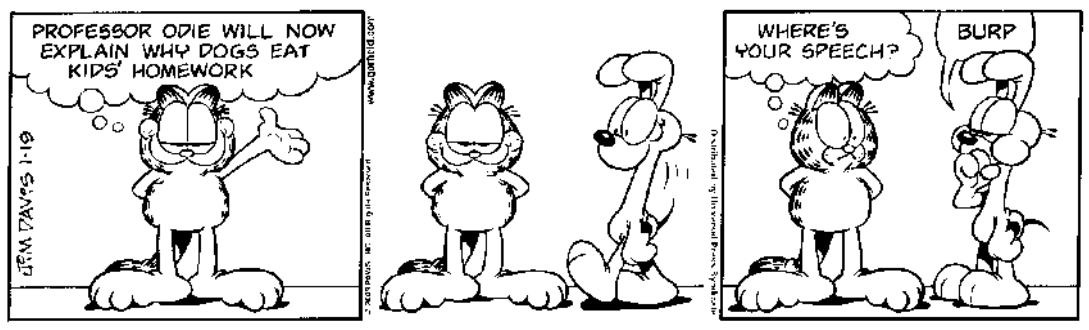
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


THE FEARLESS SPACEMAN SPIFF FINDS HIMSELF ON THE PLANET CLOSEST TO STAR X-351!
AN ALIEN APPROACHES... BUT IN THE BLINDING LIGHT, OUR HERO CAN HARDLY MAKE IT OUT! IS IT FRIENDLY OR HOSTILE?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN BED STILL?! GET READY FOR SCHOOL!
DEFINITELY HOSTILE.

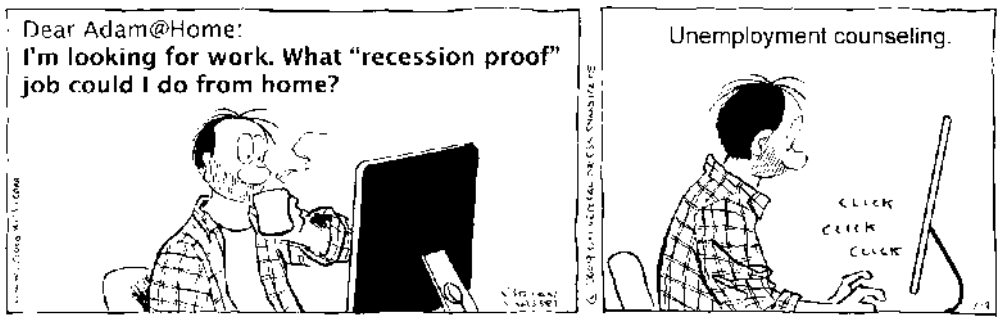
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



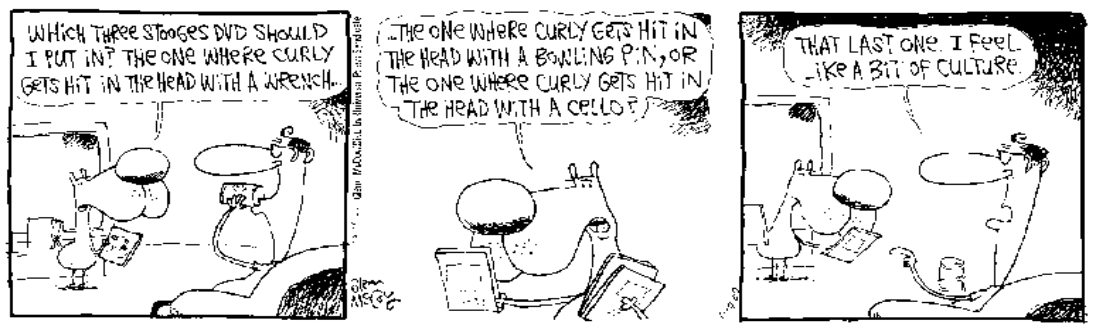
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


WHICH THREE STOOGES DVD SHOULD I PUT IN? THE ONE WHERE CURLY GETS HIT IN THE HEAD WITH A WRENCH...
...THE ONE WHERE CURLY GETS HIT IN THE HEAD WITH A BOWLING PIN, OR THE ONE WHERE CURLY GETS HIT IN THE HEAD WITH A CELLO?
THAT LAST ONE. I FEEL LIKE A BIT OF CULTURE.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 From a distance
5 One of the Seven Dwarfs
8 Plundered, old-sty e
12 Florida city
14 Eastern potentate
15 1991 "Top Gun" spoof
16 Workbench attachment
17 Automobile
18 Wrap
20 James Garfield
23 Smile broadly
24 Follow relentlessly
25 "Henry IV: Part I" role
28 Listending abbr.
29 Accommodation
30 Lawyer's pay
32 Red phone, maybe
34 Overly studious one
35 Foolproof
36 Waste maker
37 Slamdances
40 Knight's address
41 Oppositionist
42 Areas of unrest
47 Cicatrix
48 Sorta
49 Superman's alter ego
50 Apiece
51 Info

DOWN
1 Blond shade
2 — Schwarz
3 Illustrations
4 Impish one
5 Entryway
6 Mel of Coopers-town
7 Audiotape
8 Make over
9 Send forth
10 Burbot or turbot
11 Shade provider
13 Counterfeit
19 Cleanse
20 Packed away
21 Dog owner's ordea
22 Puerto —
23 Carried
25 Descendant's right, often
26 Venusian vessels?
27 Landlord's due
29 Sad
31 — out a living
33 Unisex garb
34 Distorted
36 Snake's sound
37 Fake face
38 Erstwhile
39 Laure or Musial
40 Celebrity
43 Half and half?
44 Yoko of music
45 Recipe meas.
46 Witness

Solution time: 24 mins.

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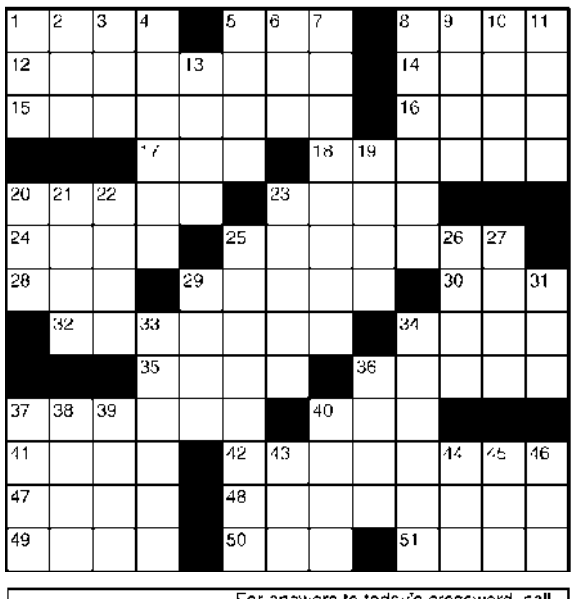
Saturday's answer 1-19



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute. touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ or y.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Trever O'Brien, 25; Jodie Sweetin, 27; Shawn Wayans, 40; Dolly Parton, 63

Happy Birthday: Stick to your game plan this year and don't let emotional or personal issues sidetrack you. It's vital that you focus on what will keep you afloat and out of the economic debauchery. If you are smart and conservative and ready to take advantage of opportunities, you will end up in a very good position with lots to look forward to as the year progresses. Your numbers are 2, 9, 16, 21, 34, 37, 45

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Money is heading your way from an unexpected and unusual source. Your help will be recognized and rewarded by someone from whom you have been trying to earn respect. Don't be aggressive, just proactive. 3 stars

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You'll be pulled between work and personal responsibilities. Organize your time well and no one, including you, will be disappointed in your performance. A tempting partnership will get you thinking about future possibilities. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You need to expand your knowledge and skills by attending courses or spending time with someone who can show you what to do. Don't let a love problem cloud your vision or stand in the way of your advancement. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Don't be fooled by an offer someone makes. If the venture will cost you, consider going it alone or backing out completely. Love is looking good and the possibility of mixing business with pleasure should turn into a rare event. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Be careful not to take on too much professionally or educationally. You will disappoint someone you love if you don't have time for him or her. A change will be as good as a rest so try new things or go to new places. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Brace yourself and prepare to be practical, no matter what is thrown your way. You have to think before you act if you want to come out on top. Don't let your emotions get involved in your decisions. A mistake will be hard to rectify. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't get angry or even share your feelings with someone who you know will oppose your decisions. Deception is apparent but, if you question the information being given, you will see the truth and can act accordingly. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Someone is likely to give you false information. Focus more on love and finding common ground with whoever you spend the most time with. If you are on the same page, you can fight whatever battles you face together. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't be too sure that things will pan out the way someone has suggested. Last minute changes may leave you in a bind. Turn on the charm and use past experience to alter the course of the changes being made. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): A career change may be offered that gets you thinking. However, once you weigh the pros and cons, you may want to renegotiate before you proceed. A good friend or lover will point out some very interesting underlying clauses. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Don't get overly emotional or let anyone back you into a corner or an argument. Stay calm and handle whatever comes your way with class, dignity and restraint. Get all the facts; emotional deception is apparent. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): As long as you don't trust anyone with your money you will survive. Settlements, legalities and investments will all be subject to deception and poor management. Stay in the loop at all times if you want things to turn out in your favor. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are imaginative and drawn to the unusual. You are passionate, sensitive, open and romantic. You strive for mental stimulation. *Eugenia's Web sites:* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

5			9		8			1
		1	4	7	2	5		
	9						7	
2	6						1	5
	5			2			4	
9	1						6	2
	8						5	
		5	3	4	1	7		
7			6		5			3

Difficulty Level ★ 1/19

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	9	8	3	7	4	2	6	5
5	3	4	8	6	2	9	7	1
2	6	7	5	1	9	4	8	3
3	4	6	1	5	8	7	2	9
8	5	1	9	2	7	3	4	6
9	7	2	4	3	6	5	1	8
6	1	9	2	4	3	8	5	7
4	8	5	7	9	1	6	3	2
7	2	3	6	8	5	1	9	4

Difficulty Level ★★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

LET'S PLAY SCRABBLE Solution: 7 letters

E	L	L	S	R	E	G	N	E	L	L	A	H	C	T
J	G	E	V	C	E	L	B	U	O	D	R	A	O	B
S	A	N	V	A	O	D	E	L	U	X	E	U	R	C
R	T	R	A	A	I	R	R	R	Γ	Ⓢ	R	Γ	R	O
A	T	N	G	H	R	U	E	O	L	N	Ⓢ	O	E	M
T	Y	W	I	O	C	T	E	L	A	S	S	Ⓐ	S	P
S	L	O	T	O	N	X	A	M	T	S	L	T	Ⓟ	E
E	P	D	E	E	P	E	E	C	W	S	R	A	O	T
G	I	N	C	Γ	C	N	W	O	R	A	Γ	P	N	Γ
A	T	R	R	N	T	O	R	A	T	O	P	L	D	G
U	L	T	O	U	G	D	S	E	R	O	S	E	I	S
G	U	C	S	O	T	K	G	E	N	D	S	S	N	T
N	M	U	L	O	C	Y	S	E	L	U	R	U	G	E
A	A	D	J	A	C	E	N	T	S	U	N	O	B	S
L	T	E	R	M	S	T	E	E	H	S	S	H	O	W

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Across, Adjacent, Board, Bonus, Center, Challenge, Column, Compete, Conceal, Corresponding, Crossword, Deluxe, Double, Down, Draw, Ends, Exchange, Expert, Flat, House, Jargon, Languages, Logo, Multiply, Opponent, Order, Pass, Points, Racks, Rules, Score, Sets, Sheets, Show, Slang, Star, Strategy, Terms, Tiles, Tournament, Travel, Turn, Value

Last Saturday's Answer: Beans

Target Field, Peter Newberger, Volume 18, 2008, 78 pp. Softcover. Language: English. Published by Universal Press Syndicate. Reproduction of the whole or any part of the contents without written permission is prohibited. ISBN 0-7407-7000-0, 978-0-7407-7000-0. Universal Press Syndicate, 4520 Main Street, Kansas City, MO 64111-7701. www.uexpress.com

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Saipan Tribune

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION,	:	CIVIL ACTION NO. 07-419
Plaintiff,	:	
-v-	:	
JOHN KITALONG SIKYANG and MERCEDES JONES CASTRO,	:	
DefendantS.	:	

NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on December 22, 2008, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 045 A 12, situated in As Matuis, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 944 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 045 A 002 dated July 12, 1989, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 90-1670, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on January 30, 2009, at the hour of 11:30 a.m., at The Law Office of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 20th day of December, 2008:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758
Saipan, MP 96950

Tel: (670) 234-7859
Fax: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Bank of Guam

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF GUAM, Plaintiff, vs. JOSEPH S. CAMACHO Defendant.	**Civil Action No. 08-0427 AMENDED SUMMONS**

TO: THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT JOSEPH S. CAMACHO

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO APPEAR by the 21st day after the fourth date of publication of this AMENDED SUMMONS and defend the above entitled action in the CNMI SUPERIOR COURT, at the Office of Clerk of Court, CNMI SUPERIOR COURT, 1st Floor, Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of justice, Susupe Village, P.O. Box 500307, Saipan MP 96950-0307; and answer the complaint of the plaintiff Bank of Guam, and serve a copy of your answer upon Robert Tenorio Torres, attorney for the Plaintiff Bank of Guam, at **Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya), P.o. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950**; and in case of failure to do so, judgement will be rendered against you according to the demand of the COMPLAINT, which has been filed with the Clerk of Court.

So **ORDERED** this 14th day of January 2009.

Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

/s/ Clerk of Court

DANILO T. AGUILAR, F0198
Attorney at LawP.O. Box 505301
First Floor, San Jose Court Bldg.
Cor. Ghiyeghi St. & Wischira Way
San Jose, Saipan, MP 96950
TELEPHONE: (670) 234-8801
FAX: (670) 234-1251

Attorney for Petitioner
EDWARD B. FLORES

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In The Matter of the Adoption of SARA DELFINA WENIO FLORES, a minor child By, EDWARD B. FLORES, Petitioner.	**FCD-AD CIV. ACTION NO. 08-0731FCD NOTICE OF HEARING**

TO: ALL INTERESTED PERSONS

Notice is hereby given that Edward B. Flores has filed a verified Petition for the adoption of a minor child in the Commonwealth Superior Court. The original petition is available for review at the Office of the Clerk of Court at Susupe, Saipan Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Law Office of Danilo T. Aguilar, P.O. Box 505301, First Floor San Jose Court Bldg., Cor. Ghiyeghi St. & Wischira Way, San Jose Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A hearing on the above-entitled matter will be held on January 26, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. in the Superior Court, Susupe Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 29th days of December, 2008.

/s/ Clerk of Court

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• 5-Liner	$35
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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Perfect Yao leads Rockets past Heat

HOUSTON (AP)—Yao Ming set a Houston record by going 12-for-12 from the field, and finished with 26 points and 10 rebounds in the Rockets' 93-86 victory over the Miami Heat on Saturday night.

Rafer Alston added a season-high 22 points to help the Rockets improve to 2-1 since Tracy McGrady and Ron Artest were shelved to recover from injuries.

Yao's perfect shooting night eclipsed Joe Meriweather's 10-for-10 game against Atlanta in 1976. Yao's only miss came at the free-throw line, where he was 2-for-3.

Dwyane Wade shook off a bad first half to score 29 points for Miami.

Yao was 10-for-10 through three quarters and he was on the bench resting as the fourth quarter began.

Brent Barry sank a 3-pointer from the corner and Carl Landry hit a jumper to put Houston up 82-70 with just under 7 minutes left. The Heat missed six of their first eight shots in the final quarter and shot 36-of-90 (40 percent) for the game.

Yao returned with 5:09 remaining, but Carl Landry was the one who kept the Heat at bay with two unlikely shots. He caught Von Wafer's airball and dunked just before the shot clock expired, then swished 20-footer from the wing, outside his usual shooting range. Landry scored nine points.

Wafer added 17 points for Houston, continuing to pick up the slack left by the absence of McGrady, the Rockets' third-leading scorer.

With no starter taller than 6-foot-9 Joel Anthony, the Heat double-teamed Yao every time he touched the ball. He still scored 10 points in the first 8 minutes to help the Rockets build a 23-17 lead.

Shane Battier and Wafer took turns guarding Wade and the NBA's leading scorer went 3-for-7 for eight points in the first quarter.

Houston Rockets' Yao Ming (11) from China, goes to the basket over Miami Heat's Jamaal Magloire during the second half of a NBA basketball game Saturday, Jan. 17, 2009 in Houston.

AP

76ers 107, Knicks 97

At New York, Andre Iguodala had 28 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists, and the Philadelphia 76ers returned to .500 with their seventh straight victory, 107-97 over the New York Knicks.

Andre Miller added 27 points and eight assists for the 76ers, making a pair of baskets in a 10-0 burst after the Knicks had closed within one with 5 minutes remaining. Lou Williams scored 15 points to help Philadelphia beat New York for the 11th time in the last 13 meetings.

Philadelphia (20-20) evened its record for the first time since it was 7-7 following a loss at Charlotte on Nov. 24.

Al Harrington had 26 points for the Knicks, who welcomed back Danilo Gallinari after a 2 1/2 month absence. Gallinari, the No. 6 pick in the draft, made his first appearance since the second game of the season and scored six points in 16 minutes. He missed the last 36 games because of a sore lower back.

Spurs 92, Bulls 87

At Chicago, Tony Parker had 20 points and eight assists to lead San Antonio to its 11th victory in 14 games.

Tim Duncan added 18 points and 14 rebounds to help the Spurs bounce back after their worst loss of season, a 109-87 setback in Philadelphia on Friday night.

Andres Nocioni had 17 points and a season-high 15 rebounds for Chicago.

Magic 106, Nuggets 88

At Denver, Hedo Turkoglu scored 31 points, Jameer Nelson and Rashard Lewis had 23 each and Orlando completed a perfect four-game West Coast trip.

Dwight Howard had 14 points and 20 rebounds to help the Magic win their seventh straight and ninth in 10 games. It was Howard's second straight 20-rebound game.

Linas Kleiza had a season-high 26 points for Denver.

Hornets 91, Pistons 85

At Auburn Hills, Mich., Chris Paul had 23 points and 14 assists to help New Orleans hand Detroit its fifth straight loss.

David West added 20 points for the Hornets, who had six players in double figures. Richard Hamilton led the Pistons with 20 points.

Detroit, with Tayshaun Prince and Hamilton already playing at less than 100 percent, got a scare when Allen Iverson hurt his knee in the third period.

Iverson stole an inbounds pass, but landed awkwardly after his layup was blocked by Rasual Butler. Iverson was helped off the court by the Pistons' training staff, but returned to start the fourth quarter.

Celtics 105, Nets 85

At East Rutherford, N.J., Ray Allen scored 25 points, nine during Boston's opening 18-2 run, in the Celtics' fourth straight victory.

Paul Pierce and Eddie House each added 13 points for the Celtics, coming off a 32-point victory over the Nets on Wednesday night in Boston.

Brook Lopez led New Jersey with 28 points. New Jersey coach Lawrence Frank benched stars Devin Harris and Vince Carter for the second half.

Mavericks 115, Jazz 108

At Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki was 16-of-20 from the field and scored 39 points to help Dallas snap a four-game losing streak.

Jason Terry added 22 points, and Jason Kidd had 11 points, 15 assists and seven rebounds. Utah's Deron Williams had 30 points and nine assists before fouling out in the last minute, and Mehmet Okur had 23 points and 11 rebounds.

Clippers 101, Bucks 92

At Los Angeles, Brian Skinner scored 18 points, and Los Angeles overcame a fourth-quarter injury to Marcus Camby to snap a 12-game losing streak.

The Clippers, whose skid began with a 119-85 thumping at Milwaukee on Dec. 20, played the final 8:53 without Camby after he sprained his left ankle landing awkwardly with a rebound of Steve Novak's missed jumper. The NBA's second-leading rebounder, Camby had 18 points and 11 rebounds in 31 minutes.

Richard Jefferson scored 26 points for Milwaukee.

Bobcats 102, Trail Blazers 97, OT

At Charlotte, N.C., Gerald Wallace had 31 points and 16 rebounds, Emeka Okafor hit the clinching free throws in Charlotte's third straight win.

Okafor had 22 points and 11 rebounds. LaMarcus Aldridge had 21 points, and Brandon Roy added 17 for Portland, 2-2 on its four-game East Coast trip.

Johnson leads at Sony, but 18-year-old in mix

HONOLULU (AP)—Tadd Fujikawa returned to the putting green late Saturday afternoon, hours after his 8-under 62 put his name atop the leaderboard at the Sony Open and showed everyone he was serious about becoming the PGA Tour's youngest winner ever.

With the sun setting behind him, Fujikawa's shadow stretched across the green.

At 5-foot-1, he never felt bigger.

Fujikawa made birdies on half of his holes for the best round of his life, pulling him within two shots of former Masters champion Zach Johnson and giving golf its biggest buzz since the Ryder Cup.

Johnson had a bogey-free 66 for the lead, but it's so crowded at the top that a dozen players were separated by three shots, giving just about everyone a chance to win—even an 18-year-old senior in high school.

"Two years ago, I just went out there to have fun," said Fujikawa, who tied for 20th as a 16-year-old amateur. "This year, I'm out there to win, and I know I can do it."

Maybe the kid isn't kidding.

He sure made believers out of the hometown fans who stood four-deep around the greens to watch him put on a show. He opened with three straight birdies, made three straight birdies around the turn, then closed with back-to-back birdies and a salute to a gallery that carried him along with cheers and Hawaii's famous "Hang Loose" sign.

Even larger crowds are expected on Sunday when Fujikawa, who turned 18 last week and will graduate high school in May, will try to make history no one saw coming. He had never made the cut on the PGA Tour since turning pro after his sophomore year in high school.

Johnny McDermott was 19 years and 10 months when he captured the U.S. Open in 1911.

Is it really possible?

"I think he's got a bright future," said David Toms, who eagled the last hole for a 65 to join the group one shot behind. "Obviously, a guy that can shoot 62 on this golf course on Saturday of a PGA Tour event has got a lot of talent."

Johnson was at 10-under 200, one shot ahead of Toms, Shigeki Maruyama (68), Brian Gay (68) and Nathan Green (69). Fujikawa, who on Friday made the cut on the PGA Tour for the first time as a pro, was tied for sixth, two shots behind.

"Awesome," said Charles Howell III, who had a 67 and also was two shots behind. "I can't even imagine shooting 62 when I was 18."

Geoff Ogilvy, who won the Mercedes-Benz Championship last week at Kapalua and is trying to join Ernie Els (2003) as the only players to sweep the Hawaii stops, had a 68 and was in the group at 7-under 203 that included Adam Scott (66).

Fujikawa changed to his green-and-white Sea Island golf bag as a subtle reminder. He used it when he spent two days qualifying for the Sony Open last week, earning a spot in the field and respect from the other players.

Relieved to have finally made a PGA Tour cut as a pro—he had missed in his six previous tries over the last two seasons—Fujikawa backed up his claim that his goal was to win. He birdied the first three holes, and when he birdied the par-5 ninth to make the turn in 31, the large crowd created such a bottleneck that it couldn't catch up to him until he was on the 10th green.

He birdied the 10th from 8 feet, then chipped in for birdie on the 11th, running toward the cup with his fist extended.

Fujikawa played with PGA Tour rookie Matthew Borchert, who shot 73 and enjoyed the show.

"What a player," said Borchert, who had never played golf in front of 100 people, let alone 3,000. "I figured that's what I would get when I saw the pairing—a lot of birdies and a lot of upbeat people."

Not even Michelle Wie created this much energy when she was 14 and shooting 68, the lowest ever by a female competing against men. Fujikawa is revered on this island for his hard-scrabble upbringing.

He was born 3 1/2 months premature, so small he fit into his grandfather's palm. He was given only a 50 percent chance to live and has been overcoming long odds ever since. Fujikawa qualified for the U.S. Open at Winged Foot as a 15-year-old amateur, and as he tried to rebuild his confidence last year, his father was indicted on drug trafficking charges.

Through it all, he has kept a bright outlook and charming smile.

And as he showed Saturday, he can play.

From a buried lie in Bermuda grass, the wind in his face, he powered his approach over a bunker and onto the green. And he finished in style, hitting 4-iron to 6 feet for birdie on the 17th, then lashing a 3-wood out of the bunker and onto the par-5 18th green for a two-putt birdie and the best round of his life.

The leaders were still on the practice range, but Fujikawa kept a share of the lead for 2 1/2 hours until Johnson got to 9 under with a wedge-and-a-putt birdie on the par-5 ninth. Johnson added another birdie on the 12th, then came in with pars.

Johnson, who won the Texas Open during the Fall Series, didn't feel like he had a big advantage with the 54-hole lead.

"Not out here," he said. "One errant shot can be a matter of a two- or three-shot swing. That's the beauty of this course. It doesn't surprise me that it's congested."

But was he surprised that an 18-year-old is so close behind?

"Yeah, I heard," Johnson said, shaking his head. "That's very impressive. Eight under anywhere is really good. I've seen him swing it and seen him putt it, and he's very, very solid."

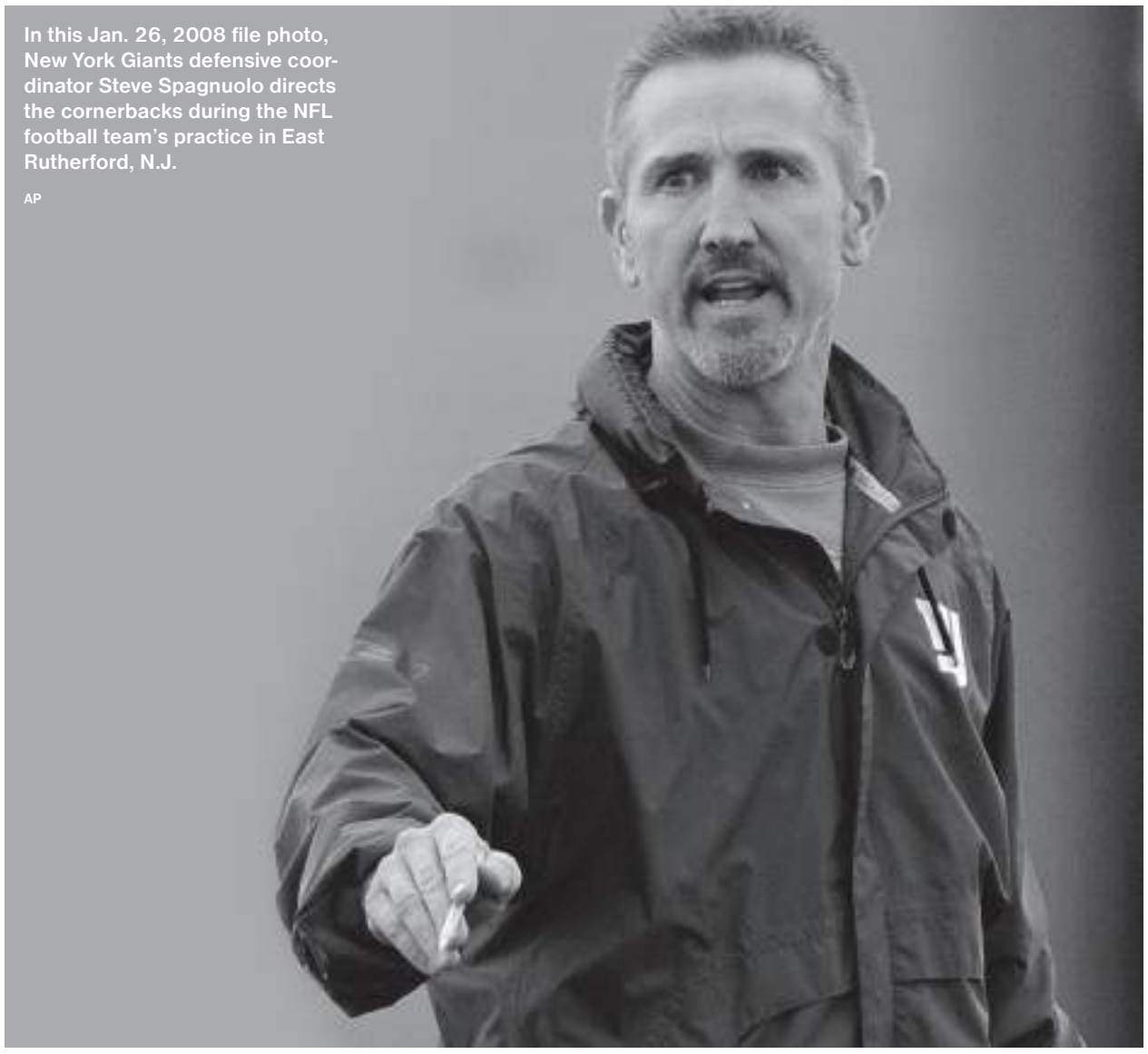
Rams hire Giants' Spagnuolo as coach

ST. LOUIS (AP)—The St. Louis Rams and Steve Spagnuolo agreed Saturday on a four-year contract to make the New York Giants' defensive coordinator their coach.

The team said in a release that Spagnuolo would be introduced at a news conference at 11 a.m. CST Monday.

"We considered some very qualified and outstanding candidates for this position, but we kept coming back to Steve Spagnuolo," general manager Billy Devaney said in a statement.

The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* was the first to report the hiring and said Spagnuolo would be paid just under $12 million.



In this Jan. 26, 2008 file photo, New York Giants defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo directs the cornerbacks during the NFL football team's practice in East Rutherford, N.J.

AP

Spagnuolo replaces Jim Haslett and takes over a team that finished 2-14. Haslett went 2-10 as interim coach after his promotion from defensive coordinator when Scott Linehan was fired following an 0-4 start.

"Billy did a spectacular job of presenting some fabulous candidates," owner Chip Rosenbloom said in a statement. "We're very excited that Steve will be our head coach and are looking forward to an exciting season."

Spagnuolo was the architect of the Giants' sack-happy defense that thwarted New England's run to a perfect season in last year's Super Bowl upset. Devaney was impressed with Spagnuolo's no-nonsense demeanor during an interview in Los Angeles on Thursday.

"There's just a toughness about him," Devaney said. "He represented what we were looking for when this process began."

"Having a guy who's got swagger makes a difference," Rams linebacker Will Witherspoon added. "A guy who can really get guys motivated is going to be a big key."

Spagnuolo was one of five finalists for the job, along with Haslett, Dallas offensive coordinator Jason Garrett and defensive coordinators Rex Ryan of Baltimore and Leslie Frazier of Minnesota. Garrett flew into St. Louis on Friday night, prompting speculation he would be the new coach. But he was only here for another interview and perhaps as a backup option in case Spagnuolo was hired elsewhere.

"It wasn't a make or break deal," Devaney said. "Jason was a very strong candidate."

The 49-year-old Spagnuolo took over as defensive coordinator in New York in 2007. A year before, New York ranked 25th in total defense. Under Spagnuolo in 2007, the Giants ranked seventh, led the league with 53 sacks and made the playoffs.

"I'm very happy for Steve," coach Tom Coughlin said. "We've been very, very aggressive on defense and we've been able to have two very successful years back to back."

Last season, they upset favored Dallas and Green Bay to reach the Super Bowl against New England with the Patriots seeking to become the first 19-0 team. But Spagnuolo's defense harassed Tom Brady all day, sacking him a season-high five times and holding down New England's potent offense in a 17-14 upset win.

"Of course being a defensive guy you'd like to have a defensive guy in charge," Witherspoon said. "No matter what, they want to make every game close. They want to make every situation a win-win situation."

Despite New York's loss to Philadelphia in the NFC divisional round this season, many considered this an even greater coaching job by Spagnuolo after seven-time Pro Bowler Michael Strahan retired last summer and fellow Pro Bowl defensive end Osi Umeniora was lost in the preseason with a major knee injury.

New York ranked fifth in the league in total defense, giving up 294 yards per game. That's a far cry better than the Rams, who ranked 28th, giving up 465 yards per game.

The day after the Giants were knocked out of the playoffs, New York defensive end Justin Tuck described Spagnuolo as "one of those coaches where he can kind of yell at the star player and get away with it because everybody loves him that much."

"I wouldn't say he's a player's coach, but he knows what it takes to motivate his players," cornerback Corey Webster said. "He gets us to work hard, but we have fun doing that and enjoy it, so it makes us want to work even harder."

Spagnuolo interviewed for several other head coaching vacancies each of the past two seasons. He was a strong contender last season for the top job in Washington before deciding to stay with the Giants.

He faces a big challenge in the Rams, who won their first two games after Haslett took over, then lost their final 10.

St. Louis is 5-27 over the past two seasons, hasn't had a winning season since 2003 and hasn't made the playoffs since the 2004 season. The offense was even worse than the defense last season, tying for 30th in scoring offense, averaging just 14.5 points per game.

On the plus side, St. Louis will have the second pick in the draft for the second straight season. The Rams have a top-tier running back in Steven Jackson and some promising young players, including defensive end Chris Long, the No. 2 overall pick in 2008, and second-round draft pick Donnie Avery, a speedy receiver.

Spagnuolo, a Massachusetts native, was a wide receiver at Springfield (Mass.) College. He got his first taste of the NFL as a player personnel intern with Washington in 1983.

After several other stops at the college and pro levels, Spagnuolo was hired as the Frankfurt Galaxy's defensive coordinator in 1998. He was hired the following year by Philadelphia and worked his way up from defensive assistant to coordinator.

Bucs introduce Raheem Morris as new coach

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—A day after abruptly firing Super Bowl winner Jon Gruden, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers introduced Raheem Morris as their new coach.

Morris takes over a team that won three division titles under his predecessor but hasn't won a playoff game since capturing the franchise's only NFL title in January 2003. The Gruden era ended with four consecutive losses that denied the Bucs a postseason spot following a 9-3 start.

"He's a leader, commands the respect of the team ... and his peers," team co-chairman Joel Glazer said.

"Raheem can relate to today's NFL player," Glazer added. "The game has changed a lot. It's always changing. ... If you don't adapt to those changes, you can't compete."

The 32-year-old Morris has no previous head coaching experience. The Bucs promoted him to defensive coordinator on Christmas Day, and he recently interviewed for the Denver Broncos coaching vacancy.

Even he's stunned by his rapid ascension, considering he was the defensive back coach less than a month ago when it still looked as if the Bucs would get into the playoffs, thus likely saving Gruden's job.

"It's really hard to even imagine right now. It's all happened so fast," Morris said. "I'm so fired up. I'm happy to initiate our plan. I can't wait to get going."

Mark Dominik, who has been with the team since 1995, takes over as general manager, replacing Bruce Allen, who also was fired Friday.

"Both of these men have Tampa Bay Buccaneers in their DNA. ... They're youthful and energetic, and both rode a clear and steady path from the bottom to the top," Glazer said during a news conference at the team's headquarters.

"Mark understands everything it takes to be a champion. No one knows this organization's roots and history better."

Morris, a former Hofstra player and assistant coach, has been with the Bucs for six seasons over two stints.

He initially joined Gruden's staff as defensive quality control coach for the 2002 Super Bowl run and was assistant defensive backs coach for two seasons before spending 2006 as defensive coordinator at Kansas State.

He and former Bucs assistant Mike Tomlin, now the coach of the Pittsburgh Steelers, helped develop one of the top secondaries in the NFL. Both accepted other jobs after Tampa Bay led the league in total defense in 2005, and Gruden lured Morris back when the Bucs dropped to 19th against the pass the following season.

The 37-year-old Dominik joined the Bucs in 1995 and served in a number of personnel and scouting positions under former general manager Rich McKay before becoming director of pro personnel eight years ago.

Sources: Hamels, Phils agree on three-year deal

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Cole Hamels can afford the finest mantel for his World Series MVP award.

The 25-year-old left-hander has agreed to a three-year, $20.5 million contract with the Philadelphia Phillies, three people familiar with the negotiations said Saturday.

Hamels and the Phillies avoid an arbitration hearing with the deal.

The people spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because an official announcement hasn't been made. A news conference is planned for Sunday.

Hamels established himself as a true ace in the postseason, going 4-0 with an 1.80 ERA as the Phillies claimed their first championship since 1980. He won the first game in three playoff series and also captured the MVP award in the National League championship series against the Dodgers.

Hamels went 14-10 with a 3.09 ERA during the regular season and was eligible for arbitration for the first time.

Hamels, who had been injury prone early in his career, showed his durability by making 33 starts and pitching a career-high 227 1-3 innings. He finished with 196 strikeouts and 53 walks.

Hamels was a first-round pick in 2002. He made his major league debut in 2006 and led the team with 15 wins in his first full season in 2007.

He has one of the best changeups in the league and anchors a strong rotation that includes Brett Myers, Joe Blanton and Jamie Moyer, who has played an important role in his development.

In October, when the Phillies celebrated the city's first major sports championship in 25 years, Hamels told fans he wanted more chances to ride down Broad Street in a parade "again and again and again."

Now, it looks as if he'll have that chance for the next three seasons.

Six Phillies remain in arbitration: First baseman Ryan Howard, outfielders Shane Victorino and Jayson Werth; and right-handers Blanton, Chad Durbin and Ryan Madson. Players who don't settle by Tuesday will exchange figures with the club. Hearings take place next month.

Lady Dolphins top Lady Ayuyus

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Marianas High School ended Kagman High School's short winning run, as the Lady Dolphins notched a 48-43 win in their varsity division game in the 2008-2009 MISO Basketball League Friday at the MHS Gymnasium.

The Lady Ayuyus won their first two games of the season downing Mt. Carmel School, 52-42, and Saipan Southern High School, 44-31.

But in their first meeting with the Lady Dolphins since last season's title match, which the Lady Ayuyus won, MHS this time had the last laugh to remain unbeaten in the tournament. The Lady Dolphins walloped the Lady Rays in their debut game, 59-17.

In that 42-point blowout, mainstay Lalaine Pagarao top-scored for the Lady Dolphins with 15 points.

Against the Lady Ayuyus, Pagarao was still at the forefront of the Lady Dolphins' attack firing a game-high 13 markers.

Jacque Wonenberg, who had seven points in her debut, played better, offensively against Kagman tallying 12 points.

Ira Palero was the third Lady Dolphins to score in double figures with 11 points. She made 14 in her first game helping MHS rout its foe.

Palero and Pagarao were the only two MHS players to make more than one field goal in the first quarter, which concluded with the Dolphins leading by seven, 14-7.

Wonenberg, who was held to two points, found her rhythm in the second quarter, as the Lady Dolphins outscored the Lady Ayuyus, anew, 15-18, to take 29-15 halftime lead.

Kagman recorded its first double figure production in the third canto allowing the Lady Ayuyus to mount a comeback.

Behind Yvonne Bennett's seven points and Nikita Hofscheider's six markers, Kagman outgunned MHS, 17-6, and moved within three, 32-35, entering the final canto.

But the Lady Ayuyus failed to sustain their momentum in the fourth, while the Lady Dolphins drew important baskets from Pagarao and rookie Lia Rangamar to preserve the win.

MHS 48 – Pagarao 13, Wonenberg 12, Palero 11, L. Rangamar 7, Tacliad 3, R, Rangamar 2.

KHS 43 – Bennett 10, Diaz 8, Hofschneider 8, Mesa 7, Mettao 4, Cabrera 4.

Scoring by quarters: 14-7, 29-15, 35-32, 48-43.

SAIPAN

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off-island participants," Oshima-Berger said.

More than 100 joined the full marathon with around 40 battling for the women's division title.

Oshima outraced Guam's Noemi Neipert (3:35:35) and Japan's Satomi Yahata (3:37:06).

In the men's division, 28-year-old Izuru Nakashima crossed the finish line first, timing in at 3:04:44. Two other Japanese runners completed the Top 3, namely Kenichi Tanaka (3:04:49) and Ryuichi Yoshida (3:12:07).

Mieko recovers in half marathon

After a sixth place finish last year, Mieko Carey finished on top of the field, clocking in at 1:34:54 in the 21.079-km half marathon.

"I had an awful race last year as I was still recovering from an injury," said Carey, who like Oshima-Berger found the weekend race easier than last year because of the huge number of participants.

More than 170 competed in the half marathon race.

"When you go out there, see a lot of runners, and exchange smiles, it gives you a boost and helps you forget you are getting tired," Carey said.

Carey defeated for the top place Japan's Megumi Shoji (1:40:00) and Sayuri Yuyama (1:41:48).

In the men's division, Jack Kabiriel almost made it 2-0 for Saipan runners in the half marathon when he finished second to Masami Iwamoto.

Kabiriel posted 1:30:00, less than two minutes behind Iwamoto, who clocked in at 1:28:25. Atsushi Yoshimura timed in at 1:30:28 for third place.

Saipan sweeps 10K

Saipan swept the 10K run with Matt Mancao and Noriko Jim ruling the men's and women's divisions.

Mancao completed the shortest race of the day in 40:36 to beat fellow Saipan runners Steve Pixley (42:01) and Yoshi Suzuki (43:24).

Mancao joined last year's half marathon and cramped after crossing the finish line. This year, he opted for a shorter race and had an easy cruise.

"I was not that prepared for a long course last year and I am really used to running 10Ks," the Marianas High School student said.

Jim also preferred the shorter 10K run, as she was not able to train for long course races because of family commitments.

Last weekend, Jim was the first female finisher in the 10K and was greeted by her son at the finish line. She timed in at 41:30 outracing Kaori Teramoto (48:03) and Naoko Urakami (49:18).

This year's Festival of Runs was supported by Northwest Airlines, Oakley, MVA, Northern Marianas Athletics, and DFS Galleria Saipan. Other sponsors are Department of Public Safety, Hawaiian Rock, American Memorial Park, Division of Parks and Recreation, Department of Public Works, and Commonwealth Health Center.

CUSTOMS

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game when it failed to score in the last two innings.

Despite the win, Goodwill is still in the losers' bracket, along with FAS, which was set to meet the loser between the NMC We Are U and Your Balls tiff yesterday.

If FAS losses, it can kiss its title bid goodbye and the same goes with Goodwill, which was paired with the loser of the Team Nang and DCEPT 6 match.

DCEPT6, which prevailed over Goodwill in its first game, won the inaugural Custom softball tournament last year and was hoping to win back-to-back titles.

DCEPT 6 needed an extra game to edge Faha and rule the 2008 Customs Goodwill Fundraising Softball Tournament held at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

The eventual 2008 champion earned a twice-to-beat advantage in the finals having swept its three games in the elimination round, but failed to finish the job early, losing Game 1, 8-19. In Game 2, DCEPT 6 regained its bearings and nailed 16-5 victory to foil Faja's upset bid.

Eleven teams joined last year's goodwill tournament with Mangge, FAS, Your Balls, Sufa, Miller Killer, Heats, AJ's, Natibu, and Sakudi Umbre on the list.

This year, only eight signed up with the defending champion DCEPT 6 set to square off with Team Nang at 10 a.m. yesterday for the first semis ticket. The winner of the morning match will duel the victor of the late Saturday afternoon tiff between NMC We Are U and Your Balls for the first finals seat.

TEREGEYO

From Page 28

the ultimate test as he battles the top 185-pounder from Saipan in Syl Teregeyo."

Alvarez believes the Teregeyo-Ware match would be a very high energy and fast-paced fight as both fighters are young and explosive and are both very fierce competitors.

"It should make for a very exciting fight for the semi main event of the evening," he said.

Aside from the Teregeyo-Ware tussle, 14 other bouts will be featured in the Rites of Passage VI: Conviction, which will be held at Saipan World Resort's Royal Taga Hall on Jan. 24.

The main event will have Marianas Elite's Maitai 'The Charger" Charley colliding with Ryan "The Dentist" Urquizu of Guam's Fight to Win!.

Urquizu and Charley agreed to fight in the 150-lb. division for the light heavyweight bout with the former enjoying a better record of 12 wins and four losses. Charley holds a 3-4 slate.

Other ROP VI bouts are the following:

- Independent's Fiden Teregeyo vs. Team Guam's Ray Apiag in the 145-lb. division;
- Zalaka's Jacob Ilo vs. Trench Tech's Vince Masga in the 140-lb. division;
- Team Haga's Jordan Ogo vs. Pwang's Eddie Paulis in the 125-lb. division;
- Team Haga's Stanley Go vs. Trench Tech's Mark "The Dark" Nuque in the 150-lb. division;
- Team Haga's Daniel Ogo vs. Marianas Elite's Kevin Esteves in the 130-lb. division;
- Team Haga's and John Ogo vs. Trench Tech's Seung Min Lee in the 155-lb. division;
- DAT Gym's E.J. Palacios vs. Marianas Elite's Dino Mettao in the 160-lb. division;
- DAT Gym's Francisco Palacios vs. Marianas Elite's Martin Ayuyu in the 140-lb. division;
- Predator's Joe "Bad Manners" Aldan vs. MTM Guam's Peter Boy Alvarez in the 145-lb. division;
- Pwang's Regal Mality vs. MTM Guam's Robert A. Baza in the 130-lb. division;
- Extreme's Marvin Somol vs. Pwang's Barry Mality in the 120-lb. division;
- Trench Tech USA's Kyle Peterson vs. independent fighter George Cruz in the 190-lb. division; and
- Marianas Elite's Derek "Pinchi" Rangamar vs. Spike 22 Guam's Tony "The Wrech" Reyes in the 190-lb. division.

Tickets for ROP VI: Conviction are now being sold at Boarderline Skate Shop, 670 Rock Steady, Han Nam Market in Koblerville, Kagman Mobil, and Pacific Trading Co. at $20 each.

Main sponsors are Docomo Pacific, Miller Lite, Pepsi, and Monster.

For more information, contact Trench Tech, Inc. president and promoter Cuki Alvarez at 483-4MMA, 483-4899, and 235-3800.

JI

From Page 28

second round.

In the Victoria tournament, the O'Connel brothers dropped their first round matches, while Heo's three other teammates were booted out in the second round.

Heo won his first match in Victoria pulling off an upset over No. 9 seed Luke Vicary of Lake Albert, NSW, 6-2, 6-2.

Another straight set win, 6-1, 6-1, over Ryan Jones allowed Heo to cruise to the Round of 16 before the CNMI bet faltered against Carson.

Heo and his teammates will stay in Australia for a couple of days to watch several games in the 2009 Australian Open before the group flies to New Zealand to compete in three tournaments.

The CNMI netter will be participating in junior tournaments in Canterbury, Auckland, and Wellington.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	33	9	.786	_
Philadelphia	20	20	.500	12
New Jersey	19	22	.463	13 1/2
Toronto	16	25	.390	16 1/2
New York	15	24	.385	16 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	33	8	.805	_
Atlanta	23	16	.590	9
Miami	21	18	.538	11
Charlotte	16	24	.400	16 1/2
Washington	8	31	.205	24

Central Division

Cleveland	31	7	.816	_
Detroit	22	17	.564	9 1/2
Milwaukee	20	23	.465	13 1/2
Chicago	18	23	.439	14 1/2
Indiana	15	25	.375	17

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	26	13	.667	_
New Orleans	24	13	.649	1
Houston	25	16	.610	2
Dallas	23	17	.575	4
Memphis	11	28	.282	15

Northwest Division

Denver	27	14	.659	_
Portland	24	16	.600	2 1/2
Utah	24	17	.585	3
Minnesota	12	26	.316	13 1/2
Oklahoma City	8	33	.195	19

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	31	8	.795	_
Phoenix	22	15	.595	8
Golden State	12	29	.293	20
Sacramento	10	31	.244	22
L.A. Clippers	9	30	.231	22

Yesterday's Games

Boston 105, New Jersey 85
Charlotte 102, Portland 97, OT
Philadelphia 107, New York 97
New Orleans 91, Detroit 85
Houston 93, Miami 86
San Antonio 92, Chicago 87
Orlando 106, Denver 88
Dallas 115, Utah 108
L.A. Clippers 101, Milwaukee 92

NBA LEADERS

Scoring

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Wade, Mia.	38	387	293	1093	28.8
James, Clev.	36	350	252	998	27.7
Bryant, LAL	38	372	240	1033	27.2
Granger, Ind.	36	313	228	950	26.4
Nowitzki, Dall.	38	357	221	973	25.6
Durant, OKC.	39	334	207	925	23.7
Bosh, Tor.	40	319	291	938	23.5
Harris, N.J.	33	228	263	749	22.7
Roy, Port.	34	270	197	769	22.6
Carter, N.J.	39	296	202	865	22.2
Jefferson, Minn.	37	340	140	820	22.2
Johnson, Atl.	38	311	134	834	21.9
Stoudemire, Phoe.	35	270	214	757	21.6
Paul, N.O.	35	249	203	728	20.8
Gordon, Chi.	39	279	156	805	20.6
J. Terry, Dall.	39	299	117	801	20.5
Jamison, Wash.	38	298	134	775	20.4
Duncan, S.A.	37	297	160	754	20.4
Howard, Orl.	37	257	233	747	20.2
West, N.O.	35	265	163	698	19.9

FG Percentage

Nene, Den.	212	343	.618
O'Neal, Phoe.	189	322	.587
Okafor, Char.	216	372	.581
Howard, Orl.	257	447	.575
Bogut, Mil.	173	301	.575
Lee, N.Y.	233	407	.572
Biedrins, G.S.	227	407	.558
Millsap, Utah	204	366	.557
Gasol, LAL	246	445	.553
Stoudemire, Phoe.	270	490	.551

Rebounds

Camby, LAC	34	119	353	472	13.9
Howard, Orl.	37	163	347	510	13.8
Biedrins, G.S.	40	167	314	481	12.0
Murphy, Ind.	34	64	318	382	11.2
Lee, N.Y.	37	119	292	411	11.1
Okafor, Char.	39	153	271	424	10.9
Jefferson, Minn.	37	119	267	386	10.4
Duncan, S.A.	37	96	277	373	10.1
Bosh, Tor.	40	104	285	389	9.7
Yao, Hou.	39	105	273	378	9.7

Assists

Paul, N.O.	35	392	11.2
Williams, Utah	26	255	9.8
Nash, Phoe.	31	268	8.6
Calderon, Tor.	32	273	8.5
Duhon, N.Y.	37	304	8.2
Kidd, Dall.	39	320	8.2
B. Davis, LAC	30	241	8.0
Rondo, Bos.	41	321	7.8
Wade, Mia.	38	276	7.3
Billups, Den.	37	251	6.8

SONY OPEN SCORES

HONOLULU (AP)–Scores Saturday from the Sony Open, a $5.4 million US PGA Tour event at 7,044-yard, par-70 Waialae Country Club:

Third Round

Zach Johnson	69-65-66	200
David Toms	70-66-65	201
Shigeki Maruyama	65-68-68	201
Brian Gay	66-67-68	201
Nathan Green	66-66-69	201
Tadd Fujikawa	71-69-62	202
George McNeill	69-68-65	202
Boo Weekley	66-69-67	202
Charles Howell III	67-68-67	202
Kevin Na	72-65-66	203
Adam Scott	71-66-66	203
Geoff Ogilvy	66-69-68	203
Bill Haas	68-71-65	204
D.J. Trahan	71-67-66	204
Jeff Klauk	69-69-66	204
Webb Simpson	66-68-70	204
Harrison Frazar	69-70-66	205
Sean O'Hair	71-68-66	205
Cameron Beckman	72-66-67	205
Steve Stricker	70-68-67	205
Brian Davis	69-68-68	205
Wil Collins	69-67-69	205
Luke Donald	67-70-68	205
Briny Baird	69-67-69	205
Steve Marino	68-67-70	205
Chez Reavie	70-70-66	206
Brendon Todd	69-71-66	206
Kevin Streelman	70-69-67	206
Kenny Perry	69-69-68	206
Tim Wilkinson	68-70-68	206
Tommy Gainey	71-70-66	207
Ryuji Imada	71-70-66	207
Bob Estes	72-67-68	207
Jimmy Walker	73-66-68	207
Tim Herron	68-71-68	207
Troy Matteson	71-67-69	207
Cliff Kresge	69-69-69	207
K.J. Choi	68-69-70	207
David Mathis	68-68-71	207
Tom Pernice, Jr.	69-63-75	207
Michael Letzig	69-70-69	208
Scott Piercy	67-72-69	208
Jerry Kelly	67-72-69	208
Rory Sabbatini	68-70-70	208
Marc Leishman	72-66-70	208
Greg Owen	71-67-70	208
Ted Purdy	69-69-70	208
Chris Stroud	67-70-71	208
Stewart Cink	71-65-72	208
Casey Wittenberg	71-70-68	209
Ernie Els	72-69-68	209
Tim Clark	71-70-68	209
Steve Lowery	71-68-70	209
Jarrod Lyle	70-69-70	209
Matt Bettencourt	73-68-69	210
Arron Oberholser	68-73-69	210
Richard S. Johnson	70-71-69	210
Spencer Levin	71-69-70	210
Michael Allen	72-68-70	210
Glen Day	70-68-72	210
Hideto Tanihara	72-65-73	210
Azuma Yano	71-70-70	211
Alex Cejka	72-69-70	211
Joe Durant	73-68-70	211
Bart Bryant	71-69-71	211
Scott Sterling	71-69-71	211
Jeff Overton	71-69-71	211
Paul Azinger	68-73-71	212
Andres Romero	73-68-71	212
Tim Petrovic	69-72-71	212
Arjun Atwal	69-71-72	212
John Merrick	70-70-72	212
Tag Ridings	71-69-72	212
Troy Kelly	71-66-75	212
Jeff Quinney	71-70-72	213
Matthew Borchert	73-67-73	213
Junpei Takayama	71-69-74	214
D.A. Points	68-73-74	215

By The Associated Press

The Week in Sports

Keglers, swimmers are week's best

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Queen and Prince of the Lanes marched to their royal court last week, as Saipan Bowling Association held its season finale roll-off for 2008.

Claiming their thrones were Bing Prince of the Lanes Zack Cruz and Budweiser Queen of the Lanes Emi Williams, who survived the stepladder finals.

Cruz, who won only one monthly roll-off, was paired against two-time monthly winner J.D. Torres (January and September) in the semifinals and pulled off a 174-165 victory to advance to the title match. In the other semis pairing, Leanne Yarobwemal, surprised nine-time winner Raphael Zapanta, 199-153.

In the finals, Cruz defeated Yarobwemal, 188-118.

In the Queen of the Lanes event, Williams topped Yho Villavicencio in the finals, 179-149. The four other lady keglers who joined Williams and Villavicencio in the stepladder finals were Diane Camacho (third), Ron Cal (fourth), Gigi Zapanta (fifth), and Elena Soll (sixth).

No thrones were at stake in off-island tournaments that CNMI youth athletes joined in, but still they performed well to keep the Commonwealth's pride.

CNMI's top junior tennis player Ji Hoon Heo was the top finisher for the ITF Pacific Oceania Touring Team in two tournaments in Australia.

He won three matches in the 2009 Post Margaret Court Cup to make it to the Round of 16 of the event played at the Albury Grasscourts in Albury, New South Wales, Australia.

Heo also advanced to the Round of 16 of the 2009 Victorian Junior Grasscourt Championships at the Wodonga Lawn Tennis Club in Wodonga, Victoria, Australia. The CNMI bet was at the upper half of the 64-player draw of his second tournament Down Under and stunned the No. 9 seed Luke Vicary of Lake Albert, NSW in the first round, 6-2, 6-2. In the Round of 32, Heo was paired with Ryan Jones and the former nailed another straight set win, 6-1, 6-1, to move into the Round of 16.

In Guam, Tsunami Saipan sent four swimmers to compete for the first time in the 2008 Junior Pan Pacific Championships. The team was led by Rezne Wong and Kai Staal, who posted a couple of records in the tournament. Joining them were Shin Kimura and Cooper Graf.

The 14-year-old Staal participated the 100m freestyle event and timed in at 57.36 seconds, to set a CNMI record in his age group. The previous mark was 57.48 seconds, which Staal himself recorded last year.

Staal joined his teammates in the 400m freestyle race and timed in at 55.93 seconds in his 100m lap passing his 100m freestyle mark of 57.36 seconds. Wong competed in the 100m butterfly event and clocked in 1:02.44, his new personal best.

Wong joined and qualified for the finals of the 100m breaststroke when he clocked in at 1:10.72. In the finals, Wong posted 1:09.86, which could have been a new CNMI National Record had he was disqualified for an illegal downward dolphin kick.

In the 2008 Inter Government/Business Softball League, Commonwealth Utilities Corp. made a big kick handing Northern Marianas College its first loss in the women's division.

CUC ended NMC's eighth-game winning run with a 10-9 triumph.

The new season for various sports federation also means having new set of officers tasked to handle the associations' affairs.

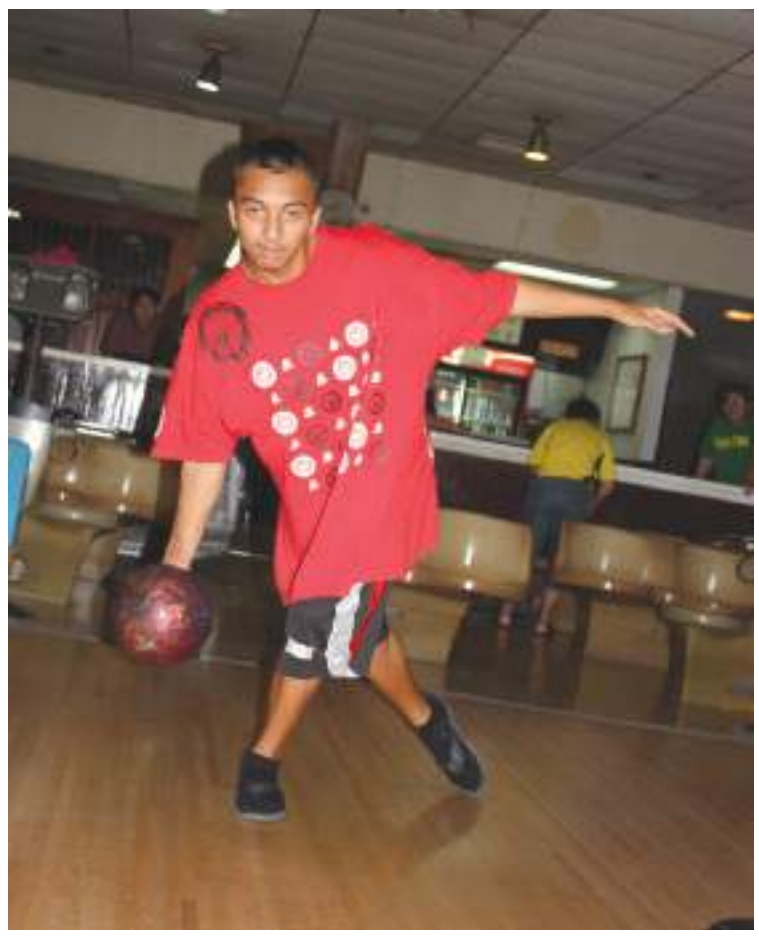
Northern Marianas Badminton Federation took the lead electing a new president in Shirley Kim. Others elected were Edwin Montoya, vice president; Reynaldo Gabriel, secretary; Malou Mendoza, treasurer; Cristy Villaflor, auditor; and Marco Antonio Aguda and Jojo Savellano, public relations officers.

The Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association followed suit naming nine individuals to the 2009 NMASA Board.

Elected to the NMASA Board were Jeff Race, Rose Igitol, Tony Rogolifoi, Elias Rangamar, Nick Swaim, Gabriel White, Michael A. White, Kurt Barnes, and Jess Wabol.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Tsunami Saipan swimmers, from left, Shin Kimura, Rezne Wong, Kai Staal, and Cooper Graf pose for a group photo before seeing action in the 2009 Junior Pan Pacific Championships at the Leo Palace Resort Swimming Pool in Guam Friday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
New NMBF president Shirley Kim, second left, is seen here posing with the federation's members during the Traders Insurance tournament last month at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Zack Cruz shows the form that earned him the 2008 Bing Prince of the Lanes title.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Rezne Wong competes in the 2009 Junior Pan Pacific Championships in Guam last week and set a new personal best time in the 100m butterfly event.

Ji Hoon Heo is seen here hitting a low ball during a local tournament last year.

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
NMC's Felisa Brel prepares to deliver a pitch in one of their games in the government/business softball at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield. NMC had its eighth-game winning run halted by Commonwealth Utilities Corp. last week.

Keglers, swimmers are week's best

The Queen and Prince of the Lanes marched to their royal court last week, as Saipan Bowling Association held its season finale roll-off for 2008. 27

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Perfect Yao leads Rockets past Heat

Yao Ming set a Houston record by going 12-for-12 from the field, and finished with 26 points and 10 rebounds in the Rockets' 93-86 victory over the Miami Heat on Saturday night. 24

Saipan bets dominate Winter Festival of Runs

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Saipan runners nearly swept the Winter Festival of Runs Saturday after winning four of six division titles.

Mamiko Oshima-Berger had a record-breaking run in the 42.195-km marathon en route to a successful title defense.

Oshima finished the race that started and ended at Micro Beach at the American Memorial Park in three hours, 22 minutes, 45 seconds shattering her 2008 time of 3:51:58.

"I had an easier time this year, as I ran with a lot of participants. I was able to pace myself well. Although it was a bit difficult at the start of the race because it was still dark, it helped that I knew the course better than most of the

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Eventual men's open first placer Izuru Nakashima of Japan, left, nears the finish line in the full marathon, while Saipan's Mamiko Oshima-Berger smiles as she is about to complete the 42.195-km. race.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Teregeyo has new opponent in ROP VI

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Syl "The Deal" Teregeyo will have a new opponent in Rites of Passage VI: Conviction after his opponent failed to make weight.

Trench Tech president Cuki Alvarez said Frank "Shotgun" Manglona has pulled out of his match against Teregeyo due to weight-related issues.

Taking the place of Manglona will be Josea Ware from Spike 22 Ground-Fu Fight Academy Guam. Alvarez said Ware has a mixed martial arts record of five wins and one loss.

"He is a young exciting fighter at only 18 years old and has fought in Preba Hao and Pacific Xtreme Combat losing only once to a Japanese pro fighter from Hayato "Mach" Sakurai's team in PXC 15: Guam vs. Japan. Josea is the top 180-lb. fighter from the island of Guam and will be putting his MMA talent to

See TEREGEYO on Page 26

MARK RABAGO
Syl "The Deal" Teregeyo is pinned on the mat by Slade "Rage" Adelbai in last year's Predatory or Prey MMA event at the Saipan World Resort's Royal Taga Hall.

Customs goodwill softball tourney down to six teams

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Two teams received pink slips after Saturday's games in the 2009 Custom Goodwill Softball Tournament at the Dandan Elementary School Softball Field.

Making an early exit and leaving six teams to battle for the championship were Sakudi and the Sciff Stars.

The Sciff Stars was paired with Your Balls in the first round of the double-elimination tournament with the latter winning, 13-6, to advance to the semifinals of the winners' bracket.

The Sciff Stars then dropped to the losers' bracket and were booted out by FAS following the latter's 8-5 triumph. FAS earlier bowed to NMC We Are U in its first game, 8-7.

Team Nang handed Sakudi its first loss, 11-1, and the latter followed the Sciff Stars to the showers after absorbing a 67-8 defeat at the hands of Goodwill.

It was a come-from-behind win for Goodwill, which trailed in the first five innings. Goodwill scored five runs in the first two innings, but was shut out in the next three innings.

Sakudi had two runs apiece in the first three innings and added on in the fifth, and lost the lead and the

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A Goodwill batter sets his eyes on the target during their game against Sakudi during their preliminary game in the 2009 Customs Goodwill Softball Tournament Saturday at the Dandan Elementary School Ballfield.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Ji Hoon falls Down Under

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Ji Hoon Heo's run in the 2009 Victorian Junior Grasscourt Championships at the Wodonga Lawn Tennis Club in Wodonga, Victoria, Australia, ended Thursday when he bowed to a seeded foe in the Round of 16.

The CNMI junior netter failed on his quarterfinals bid when he lost to No. 5 seed Sean Carson in straight sets. Carson dominated Heo in the first set, 6-1. But Heo gave Carson a run for his money in the second set before the CNMI bet lost, 5-7.

Despite his Round of 16 exit, Heo was still the top finisher for the ITF Pacific Oceania Touring Team.

In the 2009 Post Margaret Court Cup at the Albury Grasscourts in Albury, New South Wales, Heo also advanced to the Round of 16 before losing to Jack Cox of Berkley Vale, NSW, 6-2, 6-2.

Heo's teammates—the Cook Islands' Elias Tukaroa, Fiji's Tony and William O'Connell, Solomon Islands' Luke Paeni, and Samoa's Prince Matautia—either lost in the opening or

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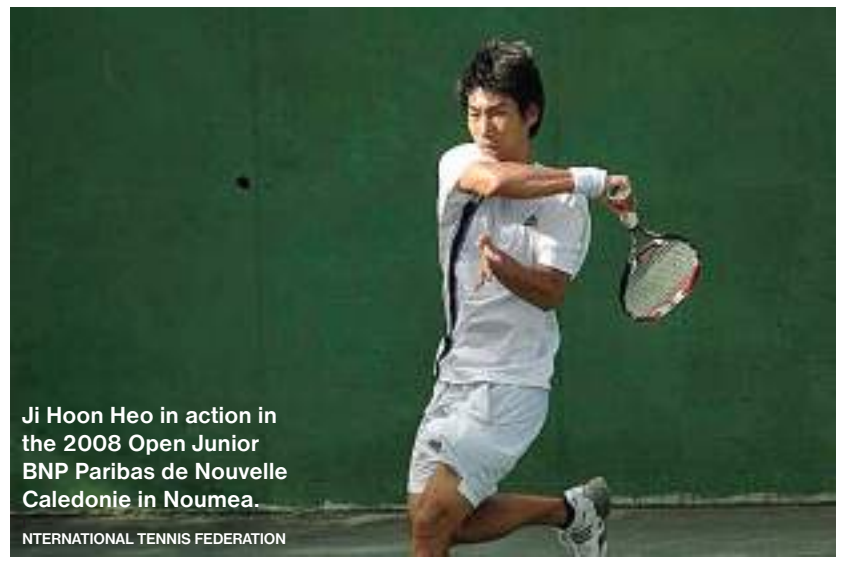

Ji Hoon Heo in action in the 2008 Open Junior BNP Paribas de Nouvelle Caledonie in Noumea.

NTERNATIONAL TENNIS FEDERATION